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# LETTERS

ON

Different Subjects,

In FOUR VOLUMES;

Amongst which are interspers'd the

ADVENTURES

OF

ALPHONSO,

After the Destruction of *Lisbon*.

By the AUTHOR of *The unfortunate Mother's  
Advice to her absent Daughters.*

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VOL. III.

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much as possible, and



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THE  
P R E F A C E.

THE motive for publishing these Letters by subscription has already been related in the Preface to the two first volumes, that were printed last year, but that relation was given in the most cautious manner, by suppressing every aggravating circumstance, to save, as much as possible, the character of the gentleman whose conduct made such a step necessary: No

## The P R E F A C E.

part of this gentleman's behaviour to the person concern'd, gave him a right to expect such lenity, which has been returned by the grossest misrepresentation of her actions and designs ; with a view of making her appear in a light that might induce some persons of the highest rank to withdraw the honour they had done her, in giving the sanction of their names, to forward the success of her laudable intention : These endeavours fail'd ; but the untruths that have been industriously propagated on this occasion, added to innumerable injuries before received, might be thought a sufficient justification for her publishing a history that would be far from redounding to the honour of the man that must make the principal

## The P R E F A C E.

pal figure in it : Such a history, with many attested facts of a most extraordinary nature, authenticated by many original letters, she has by her, but that spirit of moderation, and true benevolence, which has guided all her actions towards this gentleman, still restrains her from retaliating the repeated injuries received from him. The desire of revenge makes not a part of her composition; to return good for evil is one of her greatest pleasures, and she has long enjoyed the happiness resulting from the practice of this virtue; but it would, perhaps, be carrying it to a blamable excess, to suffer in silence the continuance of those dishonourable and unjust methods that have been taken to place her in a light

## The P R E F A C E.

unworthy the protection of the great and good; and therefore if these ungenerous measures should be still pursued, it may be incumbent on her to give the world a history of the whole truth, with the rise, motives for, and progress of those injuries she has for so many years patiently sustain'd. Few things would be more painful to her than such a necessity, as she could not help feeling most sensibly the wounds of every character that must suffer by an eclarcissement of this nature. She wishes to leave all who have been causelessly her enemies to the punishment of their own reflections, but if forced by reiterated injuries, to make use of the power in her hands to vindicate herself, she cannot doubt being justified by



## The P R E F A C E.

by the sensible and virtuous part of mankind, who will be candid enough to acquit her of any blame in a proceeding which may thus at length be made indispensibly necessary.

At present let it suffice to say, that the previous notice she gave to the gentleman, at whose earnest request this debt \* was contracted, of her intention to raise a subscription by the publication of her memoirs, unless he would immediately discharge it, or give security for so doing, was with a view of urging him to an act of justice, to which, after so long a time had elapsed, it might have been difficult to have compel'd him, especially as she had volunta-

\* See the Preface to the First Vol.



## THE PREFACE.

rily paid the interest many years, knowing that the expences of educating a young family, were to the full as large as his income could then support: She did not believe that he could have deliberately obliged her to carry such a design into execution, and waited two months, expecting that he would prudently resolve to make such a step unnecessary: Being disappointed in that expectation, she revised her memoirs, but found they contained so many incidents of a kind which a benevolent heart must shrink with reluctance from the thought of exposing to public view, that the manuscript was once more laid by, and in its stead, the Letters, these four volumes contain

## The P R E F A C E.

tain, proposed to the public for a subscription.

It has given her concern to hear by the publisher, that some of the subscribers, expecting the history of her own life, have expressed dissatisfaction at their disappointment; these she begs leave to refer to the words of her first printed proposals, viz. “ Letters on different subjects, interspersed with *some parts* of her own history.” —The conditions proposed having been literally fulfill’d, no blame, she hopes, will be imputed to her for such a disappointment. Her wishes, indeed, were express’d that these Letters might prove useful or entertaining; but she presumed not to say  
they

## THE PREFACE.

they would be found so, and honestly acknowledged that her motive for their publication was to raise a sum for a particular purpose, promised to be related; that motive now explain'd, she flatters herself, will be allow'd a sufficient excuse for any apparent impropriety there may be in her raising a subscription of this kind, and that all those who have obligingly done her the honour to contribute to the success of her design, will kindly accept these Letters, incorrect as they are (being chiefly friendly correspondences not originally intended for the press) without regretting the disappointment of a curiosity that could not be gratified but at the expence of many characters that would give pain to every bene-

## The P R E F A C E.

benevolent breast, and which she could not, without extreme regret, be forced to the disagreeable necessity of laying open to the World.

An exact account of the several disbursements in this publication, with the application of the residue of the sum, arising from the subscription, may be seen at Mr. Etheridge's, Painter, in Oxford-Road, for the satisfaction of any subscriber, who chooses to inspect it.



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## LETTER I.

*To Mr. F——.*

WITH inexpressible pleasure,  
 my dear Friend, I received  
 the account of your amiable daughter's recovery; my heart felt all that I knew your's must suffer while the event remain'd doubtful, and trembled at the apprehension of a misfortune that all your philosophy would scarce have been equal to, if heaven had resumed this invaluable gift, by taking to itself the best of daughters,

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B

just

just as her ripened reason, and improved virtues had rendered her not only the agreeable companion, but the bosom friend of the tenderest of fathers. The danger being past we may now look back with calmness on what was lately beheld with terror—On this retrospect, I am pleased to hear you own that something more than bare philosophy was necessary to support the mind under so severe a trial—No man has more Strength of reason, more firmness of resolution than yourself, yet here you have evidently found their united force too weak to sustain your sinking spirits.

While labouring under the daily apprehension of losing the dearest blessing of your life, I beheld, in  
 silent



silent concern, to what a state of anarchy your thoughts were reduced, how uncertain were your conjectures! how doubtful to yourself appeared the truth of those opinions you have long resolutely maintained! and I am now rejoiced that the recollection of what then passed in your distracted breast has convinced you that the belief of a future state of existence is necessary to the happiness of the present.—This conviction will unavoidably lead you to a more strict examination of the arguments on both sides the question, and I cannot doubt but that will be followed by an acknowledgement that those for the immortality of the soul are much stronger, and more reasonable than all the imagined proofs you have been



accustomed to urge in contradiction to so desirable an hypothesis.

You are the only Person I ever heard attempt to argue against the immortal existence of the mind, the tenor of whose actions was not of a kind that must naturally inspire terror at the thought of being call'd to a future account.

Those also who reject christianity are, generally speaking, persons whose lives are condemned by the purity of its precepts, and who can more easily persuade themselves to disbelieve the one, than rectify the other:—With you, my friend, the case is widely different—All the known actions of your life, either in your public,  
or

or private capacity, literally prove you one of the most perfect christians I have met with, and it is impossible but the belief of a future state must afford you all the joy that a pleasing hope of immortal happiness is calculated to inspire. How unfortunate is it that you should have imbibed principles that rob you of half the present reward of your virtues! and how strange strenuously to reject the belief of a religion, every moral precept of which your practice prove your constant approbation of: I take this to be in great measure owing to the early prejudices received from very improper education, which have been hitherto retain'd, and, in a manner, habitually defended, without having given yourself the trouble

of a candid examination whether they would stand the test of a close enquiry. You reject christianity upon the same principle that the generality of those who profess that religion have embraced it, merely because they were taught to believe it in their infancy, nor have ever allow'd themselves to doubt of the infallibility of their Teachers.

I dare say that, till the late afflicting circumstance threaten'd the loss of the blessing in which all your temporal happiness was center'd, you was never, even transiently, sensible of the insufficiency of your own tenets to support the mind of man under the various Ills to which his present state is incident: Now  
thoroughly

thoroughly open to that conviction, I make no doubt but you will the more easily be led to see the fallacy of those arguments by which you have endeavour'd to maintain opinions that every good man would be sorry to believe true.

Encouraged by this hope, I shall attempt to answer some of the Objections I have heard you make to the immortality of the soul, bringing my proofs from reason, and probability, exclusive of what might be urged from the christian revelation, which shall at present be put entirely out of the question; hereafter I may, perhaps, endeavour to prove the validity of that system upon the same principle, 'till then it would be unfair



to argue with you from it; shall therefore confine myself to the subject of immortality; and try the force of unassisted reason in support of that opinion.

You have often asserted, that if there be any future state of retribution, there must necessarily be a consciousness of this Life included; and if so, the happiness of that state must as much depend on the conduct of those who were dear to us here, as on our own; because it will be impossible for any benevolent mind to be happy, if it beholds those that were once tenderly beloved doom'd to endless misery, without a possibility of alleviating their torments; for, say you, if this consciousness is  
divested



divested of all passion, and gives neither pleasure, or pain, there might as well be none :—Let us see if arguments founded on reason, merely, will not be sufficient to answer this.

You acknowledge that there is one self-existent Being, and that from Him all derive their existence whether rational, animal, vegetable, or inanimate; from what we see, and know of His works, may we not reason with some degree of precision, by analogy, to what is less certainly understood? Amongst all the works of creation, that come under our observation, is there any waste of powers, abilities, qualities, or properties? every plant can receive  
from

from that single spot, to which it is confined, all that is necessary for its support, and nourishment; it sickens by removal, and thrives in proportion to the close adhesion of its fibrous root to its mother earth; the power of motion, which would have been injurious, is therefore wisely denied.—By far the greater number amongst the different species of vegetables are destined to undergo annual amputations; for this reason that mode of sensation, which we call feeling, is not given them.—Observe the various animals, see how their different powers, forms, qualities, and cloathing are proportion'd to their different natures, and the different occupations, or climates, they are destin'd to:—Of what use to the  
mole

mole would have been the eagle's eye, or to the horse the tiger's claw, feet to the fish, or fins to birds? not a superfluous gift is bestowed, but each species has exactly that form, construction, and those powers, which are most useful, necessary, and best suited to itself.—It is needless to enter into any of the particular proofs of this general truth, which a slight observation is sufficient to ascertain.

Let us then go on to examine man upon the same plan:—Compare him with all the different kinds of animals over whom he claims, and exerts a sovereign power.—Some of these are made his food, others necessary to the comfort, and convenience

venience of his Life in different capacities ; neither of which could be obtained by the corporeal qualities he is endow'd with, the brute creation being all, either by strength, swiftness, or the region they inhabit, beyond the reach of his arm.

The superior sagacity, therefore, which has enabled him to supply, by various arts, this natural defect of corporeal powers, was undoubtedly necessary to his subsistence, because without it he would have been the most defenceless of all animals equal to himself in size ; unable to procure the smaller kinds for his food, and an easy prey to the larger.—Supposing his whole duration to end with this life, or, at least, that no after consciousness



sciousness remains, was not this sort of sagacity, by which he braves the lion's force, bends to the yoke the stubborn bullock's neck, breaks to the curb the foaming steed, overtakes with certain death the distant bird, or from the rapid stream drags to the shore the scaly fry; was not, I say, on such a supposition, this sort of sagacity, by which he reigns acknowledged lord of this planet, sufficient to answer all the ends of his creation?—Wherefore then this waste of rational powers! this capacity of diving into the philosophical difference between matter, and spirit.—Of tracing effects up to their probable causes, and accounting rationally for almost all the phenomena of nature?—To what end is he endow'd



endow'd with the reasoning faculty in a degree so superior to his fellow mortals here as to feel (if the expression may be allowed) his derivation from some eternal existence, and form to himself not only a wish, but even a probable prospect of immortality? and that this is the result of the natural powers of his mind, exclusive of any supposed revelation, is evident from the constant, though doubtful, hope of philosophers in the earliest ages of the world, from all the accounts that have been transmitted to us. Of what use to him if consciousness ends with respiration is it to see and admire the eternal beauty of truth, the fitness of things, the unalterable difference between right and wrong action, or

moral

moral good and evil; the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice? and is it reasonable to suppose, that in a world wherein we see every creature below us exactly suited to the manifest end of its creation, possessing just what is necessary and useful to it, and not a superfluous gift bestowed, that the Creator should have been thus wantonly lavish in the formation of man alone, and stored his mind with useless faculties in contradiction to the general plan of creation, which is evidently calculated for the utility, convenience, and happiness of every other species?—Admitting this to be his whole duration, how eminently wretched is he made by the superior powers he boasts!—Every animal,  
in

In the different scales below himself, enjoys the present moment, unconscious of futurity, indulges every rising wish, and fearless revels in each joy to which his inclination leads; whilst man, unhappy man! for no end restrains his every Passion by the severest rules of rigid reason; and almost from the cradle to the grave, treads with trembling steps, as every moment on the verge of ruin, in the delusive hope of bringing his mind to a state of such perfection as will qualify it for immortal happiness, in that future existence he is formed to expect; should this expectation be vain, can the Being who interwove it in his nature be justly deem'd benevolent, or good?—If not, what are the attributes of the God you pretend to own.

You

You say the word *immaterial* has no meaning, yet have you frequently asserted, that the soul is only a fine invisible fluid, which being secreted from the Brain, and diffus'd through the nerves, becomes the actuating Principle; I should be glad to know what is to be understood by this? to me it seems to imply a contradiction.

—By the word invisible must be understood something of a Nature not to be discovered by our sight, all *matter* is certainly the object of sight; give me leave to ask how you came by the knowledge of this fine *invisible* fluid? and by what means it acquires the power of thought, reflection, choice, and motion, properties that have never been supposed to belong to matter.—Reflect a



moment, my friend, on the absurdities you have sometimes had recourse to in support of an opinion that is not to be defended.

The arguments you deduce from the propagation of animals to prove that the whole is matter, because the source of life is blood, a material fluid, I see no weight in; what more is proved by this than that one particle of matter is separated from another, which separated particle, in process of time, after undergoing a variety of changes, becomes as perfect a man, as to the material part, as he through whose purple veins it had long undistinguished pass'd and repass'd the various roads of circulation? It is not necessary to  
enter

enter so minutely into the subject, as to trace this changing atom through all its varied progress. — A few questions will suffice for our present purpose. Does it not in process of time receive nutriment from the mother, without any power of choice, as a plant from the spot of earth to which it is confined? and may it not be looked upon as a part of herself during the many months she bears the encreasing burthen? If by accident it is separated from her before the appointed time, in what differs it from an amputated limb? was it ever supposed to have any consciousness before the moment of respiration? the sense of feeling it may, and no doubt does possess in the same degree with the hand, or

foot of the pregnant mother, but no other sense can be attributed to it, therefore to maintain your assertion—That the propagation of animals evinces the whole to be matter.—You must go a step farther, and either give us a positive proof that the embryo has, from it's first formation, a power of thought, and freedom of will; or a negative one, that no animating, rational, or immaterial principle is infused into it at, or after the instant of its birth.

By the consciousness which the immortal mind expects to carry with it from hence, to retain, and either to suffer, or enjoy forever in some future state of existence, is meant an exact, and indelible remembrance of

of all the passions, affections, propensities, actions, and inclinations of the mind, during the whole period in which it was united to matter, according to the nature of this retrospect it must unavoidably be productive of perfect happiness, or extreme misery: the remembrance of having instantly checked every propensity, or rising inclination, to vice, and so regulated every affection by the unerring rule of right reason, as to bring the mind into an habitual state of perfect purity, even in sentiment, must afford that uninterrupted felicity, which conscious rectitude alone is capable of enjoying. Should the mind, thus supremely blessed, behold the object of it's tenderest love render'd irretrievably wretched



by a retrospect diametrically opposite to it's own, the deformity of the character must raise a just abhorrence, while grateful pleasure would be more strongly excited at the thought of being removed to a state of existence, where vice no more could hide it's hateful form beneath the fair semblance of a virtuous garb.

Hermione was, perhaps, the fairest of her sex, Adrastus thought her soul as faultless as her face, in this opinion held her nearest to his heart, and when the mandate for his dissolution came, felt no reluctant thought, but that of leaving this dear partner of his joys behind——Farewel, my love, he fainting cry'd, I go to wait thee in some better state;  
haste

haste to rejoin me, for till then heaven can to me afford but an imperfect bliss.—Death snatch'd him from her arms.—The mortal veil remov'd, the blaze of truth flash'd on his enlighten'd mind, he saw her, as she really was, a base, designing artful hypocrite ; fled with horror from the detested object, and bless'd the moment that dissolved their Union.

Thus you see the happiness of the good need not be interrupted by the punishment of the wicked.—Hermione sinks to everlasting ruin, beneath a load of conscious guilt, whilst Adrastus, in perfect rectitude exulting, mounts on high, and looks, with added pleasure, down upon the the just reward of vice.

I dissent from your opinion, that the soul changes yearly like the body; because 'tis undeniably certain, that the same propensities, the same passions, and the same turn of thought, which was discoverable in the child of seven years old, will be found in the man of forty, if the forming hand of education has not made a change in his sentiments: To prove this truth there needs nothing more than an accurate observation of the exact sameness of disposition, through every stage of life, in those on whom no other early care has been bestowed, but that of providing for their bodies by proper nourishment and cloathing. It wou'd not be difficult to assign very probable reasons for the mind's incapacity to exert  
itself,

itself, with equal strength in the infancy of the body ; as when that has arrived to a state of maturity, but this would carry me too far at present.

Now, my dear Sir, after having treated this matter with all the seriousness I should have done to convince a friend of any essential error, it is time to tell you, that I do not believe your opinion on the subject in debate, differs much from mine; but am convinced that your principal motive for espousing the opposite side, is to entertain yourself, by comparing the different manner in which different people maintain the same side of an argument ; to gratify this inclination, I have run through  
the



the length of letter you have already perused, and in return desire that your stronger powers of reasoning may be exerted to supply any defect you discover in my method of supporting so good a cause.

I could wish you were not so fond of a species of amusement, which may sometime be more injurious in its consequences than you are aware of : The half reasoners are the majority amongst mankind, these, incapable of weighing your arguments, will, from an opinion of your superior abilities, be apt implicitly to adopt them, and some there are who may be glad to embrace such a suppos'd sanction for releasing themselves from all the obligations of morality.—

Would

Would you allow yourself to consider this matter in its proper light, I am convinced that your benevolent heart would no longer find any pleasure in a diversion that may by giving a licence you are not aware of, to the conduct of individuals, prove irreparably detrimental to society :— It may perhaps be urged in excuse for the indulgence of this inclination, that if those who adopt your arguments follow also your example, no injury can accrue to society ; but let it be remembered that many people may hear the former, who have not an opportunity of seeing the latter ; and farther, that all who wish to be free from the restraints of religion and morality, will, while they gladly embrace the one, willfully shut their

their eyes against the other.—Carry on these reflections as far as they ought to extend, giving them their due weight, and I am convinced that a mind so truly benevolent will no longer find any entertainment in a custom which may be productive of so many bad consequences; your abilities would be much more usefully employed in defence of the opposite side, on that I hope one day to see them engaged, which would afford inexpressible pleasure to

Your affectionate Friend,

## LETTER II.

*To Miss Louisa ———*

I Have been so pester'd, my dear Louisa, all this day with Attorney's, Solicitor's, and Chancery business, that my head is full of nothing but law terms; and had I time to write this evening, my letter wou'd have more the appearance of a Counsellor's brief, than a friendly epistle; you will, therefore, have no reason to regret my want of leisure to accompany the two enclosed sheets of my translation, with any thing more from myself, than a promise of complying with  
your



your request the first opportunity ; but you must not expect more from me than a few general thoughts, where my opinion happens to be peculiar : there are already too many Treatises on Education, most of which, I believe, have upon the whole been more injurious than serviceable, nor can I think of adding to the number I wou'd wish to diminish ; not believing myself sufficiently qualified to correct the errors of much wiser persons who have gone before me, by giving a compleat system. My sentiments, however, you have a right to demand on every subject, and shall soon have them on this.

I have just received the enclosed Letter from your Cousin Mr. B——,  
in

in answer to the account I sent him of the injury his fortune has lately suffer'd, you must return it to me by the next post: some parts of it you will be much pleased with. His imagination is at present too wild, and wants the correction of maturer judgment, but his genius is the most promising and universal I have ever met with, and it is very probable, that he will one day make as great a figure in the literary world, as any this age has produced.—His Letter must make up for the brevity of mine, to which I can now only add, that

I am, as ever,  
most affectionately,

Yours.

To

To Mrs. P——

DEAR MADAM,

I Thank you much for your last obliging letter, the subject of which I shall probably have reason to beg your farther advice upon, and will most carefully observe your prudent directions.

Was I not determined to be happy, this unexpected disappointment wou'd make me wretched, but I hope always to preserve such an opinion of the uncertainty of things in this Life, and such an easy turn of temper, that no changes whatever may be able to shake my resolution.—

The

The ways of men are deep, obscure, and  
wild,

A thousand interests point a thousand roads,  
Nor half so intricate the Gordian knot  
As is the map of Life : so few can trace  
The mazy path that leads to earthly joys,  
That he whose happiness is vainly fix'd  
On their pursuit, hangs on delusive hopes  
His peace of mind. But give me, gracious  
Heaven!

Another goal, whose road more patent leads,  
To blessings far beyond the reach of these ;  
That if, perchance, I lose the winding maze  
To riches, honours, fame, parade, and pomp,  
I may pursue the more exalted paths  
Which point to feasts for the eternal mind.

Oh! knowledge, constant source of pleasures,  
hail!

Hail sage philosophy ! whose pond'ring sons  
Revolving mighty wonders in their minds,  
Have traced out empires, which compar'd to  
that

By Cæsar ruled, are as the realms of man  
To the contracted circuit of a mite.

Oh ! tell me not that pleasure solely reigns  
Where gold and purple hoist their courted flags,—



For e'en the swain, who tramps o'er hill and  
dale,

Beneath the shade his oaten banquet takes;  
And quaffs the liquor of the limpid stream,  
Enjoys the evening breeze, and simple chat  
Of infant prattlers, and his ready Dame  
Who tells the village news: but shepherds, ye  
I envy not; your joys, like those of courts,  
Are as a vision short; light ills alarm  
Your naked minds, for there philosophy  
No place has held, whate'er religion sage  
Has on your vacant breasts, in mystic sense  
Impress'd, to soften pain. Ye stoic tribe,  
Who in the greener days of knowledge bow'd  
At truth's imperial fane, say, rigid fires,  
Since all must err, does not your system lead  
To vile hypocrisy?—Oh! fiend of man!  
May ne'er thy hated magic shake its wand  
O'er human hearts! —

Yet neither wou'd I praise the rigid laws  
That Appius follow'd, or that Cato ruled.  
There is a beauteous feature of the mind,  
A native sweetness breathing peace around;  
Benevolence 'tis call'd; on which attend  
Whole troops of little charms that win their  
way

Into

Into the opening soul. When that is join'd  
 To stoic virtue, man is truly blest.—  
 Oh! lovely attribute, how fair thou seem'st  
 In courtly Dion; and in Thero good?—  
 But with uncommon lustre didst thou shine  
 In Macedon's great son, when at his feet  
 The Persian queens their double crowns dispos'd;  
 How gaz'd Hephestion! how Roxana blush'd!—  
 But cease the Pagan lines, nor dare to praise  
 The short liv'd meteor of a troubled air,  
 Before the lustre of your sun is sung—

Oh! child of Heaven, and smiling prince of  
 peace!

Who when the mighty nations of the world  
 Had shaken hands, then scatter'd far and wide  
 Thy troops of charity and concord fair.—  
 From thee, benevolence itself began.—  
 Divinest charm! for knowledge without thee  
 Will, like a weapon in a madman's hand,  
 Cause tumults, murders, and destruction sad—  
 Dear power I court thee. SYMPATHY, thy  
     name  
 Be'er rever'd: the Chaledonian sage,  
 Whose lasting pages have thy nature taught,  
 Has op'd thy beauties to the common eye.

And next, supposing thou hast deign'd to smile,  
 Rich TASTE, I call on thee; thou courtly dame,  
 Who feed'st on dainties of the choicest kind,  
 Attended by soft beauty, harmony, and all  
 The brightest powers of sense, to me, oh! lend  
 Your wond'rous aid, that when the prospect wide  
 Of hills, vales, lawns, green woods, and foaming  
 waves

Expand to view; confusion may not shake  
 The aching sense, but what is truly fair  
 Most fair may seem. And next to thee, blest power,  
 To INDUSTRY I bend my humble knee,  
 To thee the Stagyrte his wisdom ow'd,  
 And Tully blest thee; in distracted days  
 Thou fed'st him as the Roman daughter fed  
 Her aged fire, when liberty had ta'en  
 Her last farewell.——

I cou'd scribble on to the end of  
 the sheet, but fear I have presumed  
 already too much on your good na-  
 ture, and shall therefore check this  
 poetic vein.

In excuse for thus breaking in upon your engaged moments, permit me to remind you that some dissipation is necessary for you, and therefore, my *matterless* lines may have their use.—You will be no Scaliger, Madam, if you apply too closely; the memory, like a cord that has been too long stretch'd, on the immediate repetition of the force, is apt to crack. It is mechanical, and it must be slacken'd, that it may preserve its power of becoming tight again. I wish I cou'd find any subject, which in those moments of relaxation, cou'd amuse you; it not being action simply that fatigues the mind, but the same mode of action; for as an elastic body by being frequently bent one way leans to that



side, on being forced equally to the other recovers its intermediate straitness; so a vicissitude of opposite entertainments, properly apply'd, keep the imagination and sensibility in their just positions; but I almost despair of affording this entertainment; our petty republic at D—— will furnish but little news; though, I assure you, the jealousies, and the party feuds carried forwards among our feather'd heroes, afford us no small diversion; we have Marius's and Sylla's, Cæsar's and Pompey's; aye, and Augustus' too, for your black and white chattering talks as much, and does as little, as that hero in council, and coward in battle Octavius Cæsar: but think not, my dear Madam, that

we

we have no other entertainments than what the cackling world afford us; though to give the word cackle one of it's pointed significations, it is no uncommon sum total of country amusements. We breakfast, Madam, with Aristotle, and pass our pick-tooth hours with Orpheus, so that we keep up a good alliance between the understanding and the senses. I begin to have hopes that my gay friend will make a grave philosopher; and he does not despair of raising me into a musician; besides the assistances of philosophy and music, we see the sun, and taste the clear air of health; rarities seldom served up to London tables: nay more, we get some time to think, which I scarce ever found attainable in the busy metropolis.

From this picture I have drawn of the advantages we boast, methinks I see you shake your head, and hear you say, “What! still in the old  
 “poetic way, always painting the  
 “partial picture, still forcing roses  
 “from the briars and persuading us  
 “there are mossy banks without cold  
 “dews!”—Why then, Madam, to confess the truth, now and then we complain of the roads being dirty and the rooms cold, but upon the whole D—— is, in our opinion, preferable to London, and most undoubtedly will continue so, even when the novelty wears off, if we are frequently favour’d with your letters, which will add to this scale a ballance sufficient to counteract the only considerable advantage that London possesses.

The

The pleasure you feel in communicating happiness will, I dare say, induce you to write soon to

Your most obliged,

and obedient servant.

The



*The Adventures of ALPHONSO continued.*

**D**ON Antonio's eyes were now so far open'd as to see the necessity of taking every prudent precaution against a man who had evidently shewn himself devoid of every virtuous principle. He thought it no longer safe to leave in his possession the many papers of consequence that had been committed to his care; and apprehending, with too much reason, the possibility of his refusing to deliver them, took advantage of the young man's absence, and, while you were gone to inform your uncle of your new engagement, secured them by having the bureau convey'd to his own study.

Frans-

Francisco came in the evening to receive the final answer he had demanded, was at first startled to see the proof of his guilt in the power of his patron, but observing the locks unbroken recover'd his surprize, saw the necessity of an instant execution of his wicked purpose, resolv'd not to lose a moment in conversation, at once varied his whole behaviour, acknowledg'd with feign'd contrition his preceding fault, and after entreating forgiveness with all imaginable appearance of submissive duty, and real affection, changed the subject to that of some business he had before been order'd to transact; but terrified at the danger to which he was every moment expos'd, by an examination of the papers, had not  
patience

patience to wait the opportunity of  
 exchanging the boxes, and affraid of  
 trusting the matter to any hazard,  
 boldly ventured to offer a pinch of  
 the fatal powder. Spight of all his  
 natural resolution and acquired assu-  
 rance, his extended arm quiver'd as  
 it presented the baneful composition,  
 and the agitation of his mind occa-  
 sion'd so wild a distraction in his eyes,  
 that Antonio, shock'd at the ap-  
 pearance, rose hastily from his seat,  
 by which means the box was struck  
 from the villain's trembling hand,  
 and fell upon the head of a puppy  
 that lay sleeping on the floor.  
 Francisco knowing that the imme-  
 diate effect of the powder on the  
 animal wou'd be an undeniable proof  
 of his murderous design, and dread-  
 ing

ing the consequence of so certain a detection, waited not for the discovery, but instantly quitting the room fled precipitantly to the port, where he found the vessel you had been on the point of embarking in, ready to weigh anchor; agreed with the captain, and conceal'd himself on board till the next morning when the ship set sail. The last precaution was unnecessary, for the good Antonio, though ascertain'd, beyond a doubt, of the danger he had escap'd, by seeing the puppy extended in a moment breathless at his feet, far from intending to pursue him with the vengeance justly deserved, rejoiced at his flight in the hope that he might live to avert, by a sincere repentance, the punishment his crimes



crimes had too well merited. Whilst the good man return'd thanks to heaven for his own deliverance from the power of such a monster of ingratitude, he offer'd up the warmest prayers for the repentance, reformation, and pardon of the ungrateful villain; and not to bar his return to virtue, by such an impeachment of his character as must forever have excluded him from the society of honest men, conceal'd the horrid story, destroy'd every paper that might have proved his guilt, and lock'd the dangerous secret forever in his breast. This worthy man, to the hour of his death, knew not what became of the wretched Francisco. The ship in which he had fled from the expected punishment of his crimes was, three days

days after, taken by an Algerine Rover. It was Francisco's lot to be sold to one of the most cruel of men, by whose ill treatment being one day provoked to some abusive language, he order'd his tongue to be taken out, and condemn'd him to perpetual labour in the mines, where he daily curses his own folly and laments the loss of speech, which deprives him of power to utter the horrid imprecations his heart in silence dictates.

You will now, added my kind protector, be very soon in a condition to accompany me through the pathless air to those scenes I am commanded to shew you; a short time we must yet wait till you are perfectly purified

fied from all the gross, and heavy particles of matter, with which you are still in some measure incumber'd; this I shall employ in recounting to you, or rather in recalling to your remembrance, a few other instances wherein you will see how my attendant care has guarded you from evil; and that though I have often directed your choice it has never been in such a manner as to infringe your own agency, or lay the least restraint on the freedom of your will, but that the service I have been able to render you, was wholly owing to the attention you have constantly paid to the first thought suggested on every occurrence, which was never with a strength sufficient to *impel*, except only in the last instance that brought  
you

you hither, and for which a particular commission was given me for the purposes you will hereafter know.

Recollect the second voyage you made for Antonio—How earnestly the men entreated you to land, upon an unknown Island, for a supply of fresh water ; you have not forgot the dislike you instantly felt at the proposal ; or your resolution, in consequence of that dislike, not to permit them to go on shore, though they were ready to mutiny at the refusal ; but you are unacquainted with what wou'd have been the consequence of a compliance with this request : had you landed, you had all met the fate of Don Alvaro, who



was supposed to have perished in a storm, but in reality was, with his whole crew, destroy'd in this Island, where, at a certain season of the year, a great number of Indians come to gather a kind of wild pomegranate, which grows there in great abundance: while these are drying in the sun, they employ themselves in hunting a little animal of whose skin they make bags for the dried fruit. During their stay in the Island, which is for the space of two moons, 'tis certain death to any mortal who unfortunately touches the inhospitable shore. At the time you pass'd, about five hundred of them were engaged in these employments; they saw your vessel at a distance, drew up all their Canoes into a creek out  
of

of sight, and conceal'd themselves behind a rock that hung over the sea; had you landed they would have rush'd forth and intercepted your return to the ship; your prudent resolution alone disappointed their intended purpose.

The very next morning Don Alvaro came in sight of the Island, his good Genius admonished him in the same manner I had done you, he felt a kind of presentiment that some ill consequence would attend the landing, and for some time strenuously opposed it, but at length, contrary to his own opinion, or rather the good impression received, reluctantly suffer'd himself to be prevailed upon to go on shore by the repeated

intreaties of a nephew to whom he had been always most blamably indulgent; each took a gun and ammunition; and having walked a good way up the country, which was wholly uncultivated, without seeing any trace of inhabitants concluded there were none, and sat down, without fear, to regale themselves, by the side of a Rivulet, with the fruits they had gather'd and enjoy the delightful prospect around them; soon was this pleasing scene interrupted by repeated shouts from the Indians, who having taken another course behind a little eminence, came at once unperceived upon them; they defended themselves with the utmost bravery, but were soon surrounded, overpower'd by numbers, stript and bound;

bound; two were instantly devour'd in sight of their trembling companions, the rest put together in a cavern from whence an equal number were every day selected for the same horrid purpose; Don Alvaro was the last that perished, and during eight days confinement in the cavern felt more anguish from the painful reflection of having consented to this expedition, contrary to what he thought the dictates of his own judgment which had at once disapprov'd the proposal, than from the apprehension of the horrid death that awaited him, which he submitted to with the most becoming composure. The savages, after having seized and stript the vessel of what they could carry off, bored holes in her Sides,



and cut the cables when the wind blew strong from the shore, that the appearance of a wreck on the coast might not deter others from approaching it.

Thus perish'd every vessel which unfortunately touch'd upon the Island during their annual visit; and not a man from either escaping to tell the wretched fate of his companions, 'tis to this day supposed they were all lost by the common accidents of the sea. Had Don Alvaro attended to the admonition given by his good Genius, and obey'd the first impulse on his mind, the fatal catastrophe had been avoided: had you rejected the impression made on yours, like his had been your pitiable exit, each  
had

had the same warning given, and each was free to take or to refuse it; beyond this extends not our permission, except in cases most extraordinary, and by particular direction.  
—Again,

You cannot have forgot the proposal that was made to you by Don Fredrick Lopez, to espouse his sister, whose rank and fortune were far beyond what you could make any pretensions to; his earnestness to effect a Match, every way so unequal, I represented to you as a just cause for suspicion that there might be some sinister end conceal'd; the more he press'd the more you found yourself dispos'd to decline it, yet doubted a little whether in point of prudence

you ought to reject an offer so apparently advantageous ; I urg'd you to consult Antonio, whose intentions I knew ; this gave him an opportunity of declaring them, and your marriage with his sister Artimissa ensued. The happy consequences of that which you have many years enjoy'd 'tis needless to repeat, but I shall tell you, that had you rejected my admonitions, and accepted the sister of Don Lopez, you would have been the most unhappy of men. Under the fair semblance of a most virtuous appearance, her heart was the receptacle of every vice, and at this time she bore the fruit of her brother's incestuous love ; the apprehension of this consequence determin'd him to dispose of her in

mar-

marriage—Gomezo soon after accepted the offer you had refused; they are better suited; there lives not two more vicious, or more wretched mortals, each hates and despises in the other what both indulge in themselves, and are invariably constant only in a mutual desire to torment.

I see, continued my Instructor, it is needless to point out any more circumstances of this nature, as your own remembrance already recalls a variety of the same kind, through most of which I observe you now can trace my impressions, and perceive the service they have been to you; I may therefore proceed to the last instance of my operation on your mind,



mind, the only one that was in any degree compulsive; but will first satisfy the desire I perceive you have to know why I urg'd you to go from Lisbon the morning of it's destruction, for you are now sensible *that* impulse came from me: it was because I foresaw your stay would have been productive of far greater evils than those you have sustain'd, to which compared, the loss you now lament would be esteem'd a favour that claim'd your highest gratitude. Well may you be astonish'd at a declaration that to you appears impossible—Attend and be convinc'd.

## L E T T E R IV.

*To Mrs. G.——.*

THE Spirit of true piety that breathes through the whole of the old Gentleman's Letter I knew, my Dear Friend, would give you much pleasure; my reason for not sending more was, that such a sameness runs through them all as to shew as much of the man in one, as in fifty. All his thoughts had one bent, and all his letters contained exactly the same sentiments differently expressed; In compliance with your request, however, I shall send you another by this post, which will prove the truth  
of

of my opinion. A better man the World never produced, or one less fitted to inhabit it; the honesty of his heart, and the easiness of his disposition, made him the constant prey of designing people; nor were the things of this world of sufficient moment to him to engage so much of his attention as was barely necessary to the preservation of his fortune; he chose rather to be cheated than indulge a suspicion of the persons about him; thought it a duty to believe all men honest till he evidently discover'd them to be otherwise; and this could only happen by chance, as he never gave himself the trouble of making an accurate observation; nor indeed do I believe, that toward the latter part of life, it was in his power  
to

to turn his thoughts out of their accustomed religious channel so much as would have been necessary for this purpose. There were persons about him who took every advantage of a disposition so favourable to their own interest; of whom, nevertheless, he long retained a good opinion, but in the end was undeceived by their too unguarded pursuit of the mercenary plan; though not till after they had, by false representations, artfully drawn him into an irrevocable donation very injurious to his daughter; and which, in fact, he had no right to make: he was afterwards convinced of the error, and illegality of this step, which it was not in his power to retract, was much hurt at the thought of having been so grossly impos'd



impos'd upon, and told my friend she might make use of her right, after his decease, to dispute a possession so unfairly acquired. This a variety of reasons have hitherto prevented her doing.—Thus it generally happens with designing people; success in their schemes encreases their unjustifiable desires, which are pursued with more eagerness and less caution; past experience gives a false security, they venture too boldly and betray themselves; by which the power of doing farther mischief is happily lost.—Were it not for this infatuation the good and virtuous would be presently over run by the knavish and vicious part of mankind. May not this be what the Apostle means, speaking of the wicked,

wicked, by the term—Given up to their own hearts desire, &c.

I am sorry that I cannot procure any of my young friend's religious letters, as you express so strong a desire to see them, no copies were taken, and the originals, I believe, were burnt amongst other useless papers, by her father's executors; a few verses of that kind which my memory retains, I will enclose in this letter, if I have time; you would have been better pleased with her prose on these subjects, had any of them remained, as they were more correct than her verses at that age. Some lines, you will see, are plainly what Mr. Hurd calls a poetical imitation, the fault of most young writers

ters, who involuntarily copy the manner of those authors they read with pleasure; and, I believe, frequently make use even of their words, without the intention of doing so. The remarks of the ingenious author, just mentioned, are extremely just; I was much entertained at the time of reading them, but have since found they have led my mind into such a habit of criticising, and comparing, as to rob me of half the pleasure I should otherwise have received from all the books since perused; for by following his accurate observations, I find almost every new publication contains little more than scraps of old authors thrown together in a new form: thus what has been gained on the side of judgment is lost on that  
of

of pleasure ; and, allowing the due weight that each of these ought to have in a state of existence where both are at best so imperfect, is this acquisition to be deem'd an advantage ?

I shall now hasten through the remaining time to the death of Mrs. M——, and the unhappy marriage of her daughter ; having mention'd a sufficient number of those circumstances which, by shewing her character in its true light, will reconcile the apparent contrarities of her conduct.

After the Arcadian scene, already related, the unfortunate shepherdes,



was kept over her, obtained her mother's leave to go home a few weeks before the rest of the family: At their return she evidently saw the use, which the prudent old maiden gentlewoman had made of her absence to raise in Mr. M—— every possible suspicion of his daughter; and to convince him how much he would stand in need of *her* assistance in case of his wife's death; during this time she gained so much ground in his opinion, that he gave her the name of Prudentia, by which we will hereafter call her. The effects immediately experienced by my friend convinced her of the absolute necessity of letting her mother into the whole affair, and the treatment she had met with upon it, as there appeared

appeared no other possible method of dispossessing Prudentia of the ascendancy she had gained over her father, but by letting him see how thoroughly her plan would be disapproved by the person he had, of all others, the highest opinion of: This succeeded according to her expectation, though Mrs. M—— very justly blamed her daughter for indulging a whim that had exposed her to this mortification; she entirely condemn'd every step that had been taken in consequence of it; represented to her husband the ill effects that such management must necessarily have on his daughter; and enjoined him never to put her under the direction of persons so totally unacquainted with the proper method of regulating her conduct. He saw

the force of the arguments urged, was convinced by them, and resolved to pursue the plan the good lady had laid down to him in the plainest terms; in consequence of which the advice he had before paid so much attention to was no longer regarded.

Here my young friend's vivacity got the better of her judgment; elated with her triumph, she treated Prudentia and her family in so contemptuous a manner, that their visits were less frequent; on finding them less acceptable, they had patience to wait a more proper season, and too much art to shew the inclination, when they had not the power to punish. From this time to the death of Mrs. M—— I believe, they attempted

attempted not to interfere in her family, but this good lady's eyes were no sooner closed, than their attempts were renewed to regain their former influence.

Miss M. was at first inconsolable for the loss of her mother; on the day wherein she was to be buried, the physician who had attended her, a very sensible man and an intimate friend of Mr. M——, apprehensive of the ill effects which the agitation of mind on this solemn occasion might have on my young friend's health, as she was then far from well, proposed to the old gentleman, that a young lady of their intimate acquaintance, a very prudent and sensible girl, should be permitted to



stay the evening with them, which she had very obligingly offer'd in hopes of being able, in some measure, to divert their attention from the melancholy sound of that bell which must proclaim the moment wherein the last sad offices were paid. This proposal was approved, the young lady came, sat with them the whole evening, and endeavoured by every possible method to sooth the melancholy which oppress'd them both; just before the commencement of the sad solemnity came Prudentia and her sister, they sent for Mr. M. out of the room, told him their intention was to console him under his affliction not having the least expectation of finding company with his daughter *at such a time*; the good  
old

old gentleman related how it hap-  
pen'd, and as the young lady was no  
stranger to them desired they would  
stay; which was refused, on pretence  
of its being indecent to see any person  
that was no relation to the family;  
they left him with all appearance of  
surprize and astonishment, after  
throwing out some hints of the cen-  
sures that must be pass'd on a daugh-  
ter's seeing company while her  
mother lay dead in the house.

This made some addition to the  
sorrowful widdower's distress, by  
leaving his mind in doubt whether  
he had not done wrong in approving  
this visit; which was all the present  
effect, though these hints afterwards  
served for a good foundation to work  
upon.

F 4

My

My Friend's heart was not a soil wherein sorrow could be of long duration; the first impressions of grief were violent, but these quickly wore off, and her mind soon returned to its former state: she now reminded her father of his promise not to put her under the direction of Prudentia, and her family, which he renewed; committed the management of his family to her care, exhorted her to be prudent, grave, and attentive, and to follow her late mother's example; and assured her, on these conditions, she should be entirely mistress of her actions. Nothing cou'd have made her more happy than this assurance; in return for which she promised all he desired, and very sincerely intended it; but  
 was

was too young to discharge the trust committed to her care in so cautious and steady a manner, as not to leave frequent openings for persons who were continually upon the watch to point out faults in her conduct. Any instances of bad management, tho' proceeding only from want of the judgment that must be founded on experience, were immediately remarked and artfully painted in the strongest colours, by asking such seemingly accidental questions as would naturally lead a person of Mr. M—'s turn to the opinion intended to be conveyed; without giving the least appearance of *design* in the enquiry. By these methods she was insensibly undermined in her father's opinion, and not suspecting  
his



his being thus continually practised upon, was frequently surprized at his finding fault pettishly with those family affairs in which, not having really the least judgment, he was often wrong; the ground she daily lost was by these artful methods gained by Prudentia, who had always spies upon her actions, and having picked up a variety of trifling incidents of a kind that might bear a disadvantageous construction, repeated them to her father, and once more advised him to pursue the plan she had before proposed, and lay those restraints on his daughter which *her* wisdom judged to be necessary. One circumstance, that I forgot to mention in its proper place, contributed greatly to the success of this design. A young

A young gentleman whom Miss M—— had long encouraged to follow her, with some hopes of success, grew very importunate for permission to make proposals to Mr. M——, this she would not consent to, choosing neither to dismiss or marry him, one of which must have been the consequence of such a permission, and therefore seemed rather to defer, than absolutely refuse it. He wrote several letters to her on this subject, after the death of her mother, probably with a design of getting some promise under her hand: These letters she was imprudent enough to answer, tho' in a very cautious manner, yet with some expressions of affection, but at the same time refus'd to grant the desired permission,

mission, on pretence that her father had already engaged her to another, and consequently would be displeased at her having allow'd his addressees; exhorted him to think no more of her, but not in a manner that was likely to produce such an effect. The circumstances of the engagement have been already related, which were such as, you see, could not have any great weight with her, but were thought sufficient to answer the present purpose.

This young gentleman was amongst the number of those whose addressees she thought were paid more to her fortune than her person; and such it was her constant custom to encourage, by false hopes, as long as possible, which

which she unjustly call'd a proper punishment for false pretences. However, he became at length too importunate and troublesome, to be put off any longer—A cause of quarrel was then to be found,—he was fond of gaming—she peremptorily forbade his playing on pain of never speaking to her again—he promised to obey, and every day saw the hazard table surrounded without increasing the number; this strict observance of the injunction defeated her intention, she saw through the motive of his obedience, was not weak enough to be deceived by it, and concluded that to be secure of her absence would immediately afford the opportunity she sought. This opinion was soon verified. Coming  
in



in unexpectedly, when supposed to be many miles distant, she found him so deeply engaged in play that it was some time before he observed her standing by him; he rose in confusion, attempted an excuse that was rejected with contempt, she would not hear any justification, gave him at once a formal dismissal, declared her resolution never to speak to him again, and left the room immediately. In vain did he afterwards intreat to be heard, in vain employ his friends to interceed for him, she remained inexorable, and would not be prevail'd with to treat him with common civility. Disappointed in his hopes, and provoked by such extreme ill usage, he threaten'd to be revenged by shewing her letters; this threat

was

was artfully conveyed to an intimate acquaintance of hers, by one of his, who strenuously advised the making up the quarrel to prevent so injurious a consequence: she now too late repented the having neglected to get back her letters before a rupture, but was determined not to recover them by this method; and, knowing they did not contain any thing of much moment, chose rather to run the hazard of seeing them made public, than permit the continuance of his addresses. Her conduct in this affair was no doubt highly blamable, nothing can be said in excuse for it, and how bad soever the consequences had proved, they would have been justly deserved.

Did

Did the effects of this coquetish disposition cease with the indulgence of, or inclination to it, the turn would be less unfortunate; but it frequently happens that the ill impressions, thus stamp'd, last thro' life, and are so strong that the most prudent subsequent conduct is not sufficient to efface them. The opinion fixed by a few such incidents is hardly ever to be shaken; and very often has it happened, that a point of the utmost moment has been many years after disadvantageously determined, merely upon the prejudice imbibed from this kind of misconduct in the early part of Life; a fact she has since unhappily experienced; yet how difficult is it to enforce this conviction at the time when only it could

could be of service! the strongest arguments often prove ineffectual, and 'till the consequences are felt they are seldom believed. Is not this, my dear Madam, too much the case thro' life with the major part of mankind?—Is not almost all the experience we gain, purchased at the expence of inconveniences, and vexations; entailed by false steps in our own conduct? will all the talking in the world convince a young man, who is sensible of no immediate ill-effects from intemperance, that his constitution will in time be inevitably ruined by it, and must he not feel this truth before he believes it? Does not every good man naturally conclude that others are as honest and well meaning as himself; and 'till he



has suffer'd severely from acting up to this opinion, is he to be convinced of the mistake? carry this enquiry on, and it will hold throughout. Upon this principle half the errors of mankind may be accounted for, and in some measure extenuated. We enter this world perfect strangers to all that surround us, the first impressions are astonishment and admiration; curiosity next succeeds, and the first use made of speech is to ask information, here unfortunately we are always led wrong: the sort of persons to whom the care of infancy is usually committed, having no right notions themselves, cannot possibly convey any. The child at seven years old begins to be sensible of the errors imbibed from his nurse:

the

the lad of fifteen, observing the contrariety of opinions, is bewilder'd in his choice, knows not which to embrace, and attempts to form one of his own; this is generally adapted to the prevailing inclination, which makes him doubly tenacious of it; and gives so strong a bias to the growing judgment, that 'tis often very late before the man discovers it's fallacy: Thus impeded in the search of truth by a succession of errors, passions, and prejudices, that are for years of stronger growth than reason, we reach the confines of the grave before we arrive at that knowledge of ourselves, and the world we are connected with, which alone can enable us to act with prudence and propriety in it—Wretched indeed would be the

state of man was this to be the whole of his existence! but regarding it only as a probationary, and a progressive state, every improvement in virtue, every encrease of knowledge, affords peculiar satisfaction from the certainty of having thereby advanced so much nearer to that absolute perfection, which alone can secure unalterable happiness beyond the grave. —Adieu, my dear friend, I can no more than subscribe myself

most affectionately Yours, &c.

The following Verses were addressed to a bishop on her reading his plain account of an institution, which had before been treated by some of  
the

the Clergy in a most unreasonable  
and unintelligible manner.

Accept, great Hoadly, these unworthy lays,  
Too young my Muse to sing thy matchless praise,  
Yet take the tribute of a thankful pen,  
Due to thy Labours, greatest, best of men!

To veil religion in a mistic cloud,  
And keep in ignorance the wondring crowd,  
For ages past, has seem'd the priestly art;  
To undeceive, has been thy nobler part;  
T' explain the text as Christ himself design'd,  
And free from slavish fear the virtuous mind,  
Glorious the task!—Men yet unborn shall own  
They owe their virtues to thy works alone.  
Was Britain's Church with men like thee supply'd,  
Who sway'd by neither Interest or pride,  
Dared honestly oppose religious guile,  
And with plain truth illuminate the Isle,  
Priestcraft should be the standing jest no more,  
But men revere what they despis'd before.



*To Mr. M——, written when in an  
ill state of health.*

THE pious mind, in wonder lost, surveys  
Thy works, O God! and adoration pays:  
Before thy awful throne, devoutly bows,  
And brings thy tribute of obedient vows.  
With shame confessing former guilt incur'd,  
She dreads the wrath recorded in thy word,  
But to the refuge of thy pardon flies,  
And on the merit of thy Son relies;  
Accepts his offers, and fulfills his laws,  
And on *his terms*, to him commits her cause.  
She owns, severely kind, thy will ordains  
This blended state of happiness, and pains:  
She feels the blessings which thy hand bestows,  
Beneath the pressure of unnumbered woes,  
Thankful for these, submissive under those. }  
Whene'er thy hand resumes the favours lent,  
Of health, or friends, she feels no discontent;  
Yielding to reason's and religion's voice,  
Prefers thy Wisdom, to her erring choice;  
To every ill, allows her rightful claim;  
But for each blessing glorifies thy name;  
Nor proudly forms a wish to choose her state,  
But joys to think thy will shall fix her fate.

Anxious

Anxious alone to gain thy kind regard  
By strict obedience to thy sacred word;  
To thy paternal care commits the rest,  
And knows Thy Will, whate'er that is, is best.

*To the same.*

*On the chief Happiness of Man.*

IN all the different Schemes mankind pursue  
The end the same; 'Tis happiness in view:  
For this, the Mariner while breaking waves  
Threat instant death, the dang'rous passage braves;  
For this th' Astrologer whole sleepless nights  
Fix'd to the Tube, explores the varying lights:  
For this, the Miser hoards his shining Pelf,  
And aims at happiness, by heaping wealth:  
For this, some tread the slip'ry paths of state,  
And fancy bliss annex'd to being great;  
Others to different pleasures give the reins,  
And disappointment crowns their fruitless pains.—  
All are deceiv'd, who *here* expect to find  
Ought that can *satisfie* the human mind;  
Search thro' the World, nothing created can  
Afford the proper happiness of man.

That power immense who gave all being birth,  
 Who form'd the Heavens, and who upholds the  
 earth,

Whose word first made, whose mercy still sustains  
 Those worlds unknown, o'er which his justice  
 reigns,

Whose smiles alone create eternal peace,  
 Is the true center of our real bliss.

That man alone obtains the end desir'd,  
 Whose bosom with immortal love is fir'd;  
 Who follows happiness in virtue's road,  
 And steadily obeys the will of God:

Who will by no temptation be betray'd;  
 Nor can by fear of punishment be sway'd:

Whose fixt design is steadfastly pursued,  
 To seek his maker as his chiefest good:

Who by th' unerring Rule his way directs,  
 Watches each word, and every thought inspects,  
 Gives up his own to the almighty Mind,  
 To act, or suffer, is alike resign'd.

This man, of Heaven's protection ever sure  
 While thousands fall around shall stand secure;  
 While those who plac'd their happiness below  
 Shall wake from dreams of bliss to endless woe,  
 He finds his joys by added time increas'd,  
 And the best blessings are reserv'd 'till last.

Happy

Happy in Life, and when approaching death  
 In ghastly form, demands his fleeting breath,  
 The long expected summons gladly hears,  
 While conscious virtue dissipates his fears,  
 Whom he has trusted, whom believ'd he knows,  
 To whom the unembodied spirit goes;  
 Safely he ventures thro' the darksome way,  
 The destin'd passage to eternal Day,  
 Hopes in his God, nor finds that hope deceiv'd,  
 But is by him to endless blifs receiv'd,  
 And crown'd with glory which can never fade,  
 Enjoys in Heaven that God he here obey'd.



## LETTER V.

*To Mr. B——*

IN such lively colours do you paint the rural beauties of nature, \* and the happiness resulting from the study and enjoyment of them, that 'tis scarce possible to read the expressive description, without sickening at the thought of a confinement to this noisy metropolis, and longing to share your calm and improving retirement. Happy is your friend in a companion so qualified to point out all that can in every scene either delight or instruct the mind; he will in time, no doubt, learn of you to relish the

\* See vol. 2d, Letter 6.

prudent

prudent exchange of a life of riot and insignificancy for the composing rational pleasures of a philosophic retirement; from which alone results what may properly be call'd happiness; the most the former can bestow is a short suspension of misery procured by a total dissipation of thought; for that mind must be miserable indeed that knows no higher enjoyments than what a gay life, as it is improperly call'd, can afford; a fondness for those generally gives an indifference, or rather an aversion to retirement; if after the novelty wears off, you continue equally pleased with your present situation, you are the only young man, I have met with, who can, with the same apparent satisfaction, enjoy both  
wisdom

wisdom and folly, and always suit yourself to the present scene; whatever that may happen to be: Your disposition is certainly like your genius, entirely at your own command, and equal to every task. If that genius forgave the sudden check it received from you when writing last to me, it is more than I can easily persuade myself to do, and had I the vanity to think that my silence would be any punishment, would not write to you these three months.—Could any thing be more provoking than to break off in the midst of so beautiful a description when I was even on the point of catching the pleasing infection.

Attentive

Attentive to thy elevated song,  
In admiration lost! my raptur'd soul  
Her trembling pinions spread, and boldly sprung  
To mount the seraph's wing that bore thy muse  
Sublime, in pomp majestic, to the court of  
Heaven.—

When lo! thy tuneful numbers cease—  
Abruptly cease!—To check my daring flight.—

The severest punishment I can  
inflict will be to write you a very  
long and stupid letter, curiosity will  
no doubt carry you to the end of it,  
and then you may enjoy the mortifi-  
cation of having reaped neither plea-  
sure or profit from the expence of  
much time in reading the whole.—  
To begin.

Your last Letter asks many ques-  
tions, which you immediately answer  
for me; but not in the manner I  
should



should have answered them myself, consequently the deductions from them are not to be allowed.

By predispositions I do not mean the different degrees of fear or love towards different objects, resulting from a comparison made between them, and a determination formed upon that comparison; but that tendency observable in the minds of children, even in the earliest infancy, to kindness, or cruelty, courage, or cowardice, forwardness, or patience, humility, or pride, &c. which tendency is not occasioned by any given preference to one more than the other of these, but evidently proceeds from a kind of natural inclination in the mind, before reason has gained sufficient

ficient strength to exert itself in forming comparisons whereon to fix any proper determination; when time has ripened the judgment, and thereby given the power of this exertion, does it not frequently happen that reason, disapproving the previous choice of inclination, is employed to conquer these dispositions? **The extreme difficulty she frequently finds in the conquest proves them to be, as it were, interwoven with the soul, and the certain victory always in her power (if allowed a fair trial) clearly evinces the impossibility of their proceeding from different modes of union between the sensient and the sensible systems; because, these modes being unalterable, the effects produced by them must be unchangably**  
the

the same, while that union lasts :  
 This Hypothesis therefore, tho' very  
 prettily urg'd, to me appears not to  
 be defensible. The assertion which  
 immediately follows, I cannot allow  
 to be founded on fact,

As you own the authority of the  
 christian revelation, from *that* must  
 your religious opinions be taken ; and  
 that revelation does not say that the  
 Deity requires the same degree of  
 perfection from all mankind, which  
 you have alledged to prove that the  
 capacity or powers of all men must  
 be equal ; on the contrary, it plainly  
 declares, that of them to whom  
 much is given, much shall be required ;  
 and that from those who have re-  
 ceived an inferior degree of ability,  
 inferior

inferior improvements are expected.

Nor does this inequality of gifts reflect either upon the justice, or goodness of God, for there is no reason to be assigned why there should not be as regular a gradation, from the first to the last, of every different species of rational beings, as there is supposed to be of *being*, as such, abstractedly considered, from the deity to the meanest reptile; and if every rational creature by making the best use of the capacity he is endowed with (whether that be an extensive or a confined one) shall certainly attain the highest degree of felicity, his nature is capable of enjoying, can there remain any cause of complaint? and may not all who are perfectly happy be in one sense said to be equally so,

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though



though not in the degree of happiness yet in proportion to the power of enjoyment : and each be so perfectly satisfied as not to be able even to form a wish beyond what it possesses? thus a small vessel, though it contains not so much in quantity as a large one, is equally full when it can hold no more; and thus, the various dispensations of providence in the intellectual world are perfectly reconcilable to all the known attributes of the Deity. But on your supposition, “ That all minds were originally formed with the same  
 “ powers, and the same force or  
 “ strength of powers, and that the  
 “ present apparent diversities are  
 “ owing to the different arrangement  
 “ of matter, and the different modes  
 of

" of union between that and spirit"

—It must be allowed that these different arrangements and modes of union, are an effectual bar to an equal exertion of their powers, from whence it must naturally follow, that, at the dissolution of this union, those minds who have been thus closely confined, and thereby rendered incapable of making any considerable improvements, must become most painfully sensible of their past disadvantageous situation, and have a reasonable cause to complain of the injustice done them by such an imprisonment. Now that no rational creature ever can have a reasonable cause to complain of the dispensations of providence is certain, consequently this opinion, which gives an unan-

swerable one, cannot be founded on fact.

The long train of causes to which you afterwards assign the peculiarity of disposition, if true, would amount to an evident proof that each peculiar disposition (of which there are an endless variety) is so fixed by the unchangeable law of nature, or rather the will of God, as not to admit a possibility of being altered or corrected—If so, mankind are not free agents, can have no power of governing their own conduct, but are involuntarily led, by these dispositions, into many wrong actions, for which, on such a supposition, they cannot justly be accountable, or deserve any punishment; neither any reward  
for

for a right behaviour owing merely to a more fortunate disposition.— This being plainly contradictory to the christian revelation, if one is true, the other must be false.

The cases of Ideotism and Madness come next under consideration. “ No person, you say, will dream “ of asserting that these are not the “ effect of corporeal changes.”—But in the former case, that of Ideotism, pray how is it to be proved that the animating principle is endued with any degree of rationality? If you answer, that the similar effects which extreme old age have, sometimes, produced in persons who have in early life given proofs of strong reason and lively genius, amount to a cer-  
H 3                      tainty



tainty that an alteration in the sensible system *may* be the occasion of Idiotism, it must be granted; but it does not follow from hence that it always proceeds from that cause: When produced by age the whole corporeal frame is visibly decayed, the organs of sensation are no longer equal to the discharge of their proper functions; the nervous system (originally formed to last but a determinate time) is worn out, and the man reduced to the weakness of infancy. The appearance of Idiotism here, therefore, may be justly imputed to an equal degree of weakness in the sensory, by which it is rendered incapable of either retaining the old, or receiving any new impressions; but this may also be morally accounted for: It happens

happens not 'till the last stage of mortality, and, to the individual, may be a kind dispensation, not only by rendering him insensible of those pains of body, which usually attend the separation of the soul from it, but as it may also save him from any uneasy reflections that might possibly arise from the thought of losing a companion to whom he had been too long, and intimately joined, not to esteem as a part of himself; and these particular instances are certainly productive of general good, for there cannot be a more forcible argument for humility than what these melancholy changes afford, which all may live to undergo: besides innumerable other advantages that may be drawn from the observation. No

part of this is applicable to those who have always been Idiots; they daily encrease in strength, and grow up to maturity, are in full health and vigour, the organs of sensation perfect, and frequently particularly susceptible of impressions. When all the visible parts of the corporeal system thus appear to be in a state of perfection, what reason is there to suppose that the sensory only is peculiarly weak, unless any such weakness had been anatomically proved, but you say there never has yet been any symptoms of it discovered in dissections, and on such a supposition can any just cause be assigned why a rational mind should be confined for a great number of years to a body so unfit for it's reception as to render  
any

improvement, or exertion of it's faculties impossible? of what use then are those faculties? or to what purpose given? Will you say the creative power was ever exerted to no end? and what end can be answered by the creation of a rational mind only to be thus imprisoned? Is it not, therefore, a much more probable opinion, that the animating principle which actuates the human shape in idiots is a separate link in the great chain of being, and not endued with the same powers of reason given to the souls of other men? here it might be asked of what use this link is? a certain answer is above the reach of finite capacities, but perhaps it might be necessary to make the regular gradation perfect—  
However, there is no absurdity entail'd



tail'd by the supposition that I can perceive.

Madness is of a very different nature—If that is ever occasioned by any disorder of the body, it is much more frequently produced by an improper indulgence of the passions and affections of the mind. Ambition, pride, fear, love, and anger, have been separately the cause; not from any tendency in the nature of either to such a consequence, but merely because they have not been kept under proper regulations by the governing faculty of reason, which was endued originally with a sufficient power to prevent the excesses productive of such fatal effects; and for the culpable non-exertion of that power

power, may not the deprivation of it be the proper punishment?

The variation in the Nervous system of these unfortunate people (which you prove by the necessity of giving a double quantity of medicine to act upon them) may be, most probably, occasioned by the disorder and confusion of the mind; were it not so, these symptoms of an alteration in the body, or constitution, must first appear, and give warning of approaching madness; which I do not take to be the case.

The assistant forces of the great Mr. Lock, that you have called to your aid in the support of your argument, have not yet beaten me from  
the

the field, though I acknowledge each of you separately, to be far superior to me both in understanding and knowledge, yet your united assertion, with all that has been hitherto alledged in defence of it, cannot make me assent to the truth of a proposition, which every day's experience, of what passes in my own mind, contradicts : yet as there can be no probability of obtaining a victory with a strength so inferior, I shall modestly retreat, that I may not incur the censure of rashness by renewing the engagement, or opposing my singular opinion, unsustained by any powerful alliance, to the combined declarations of so many wise and learned men. Yet give me leave to observe, before I quit the subject, that  
you

you seem to have been at some loss for arguments to defend your hypothesis, when you brought that succession of Ideas, arising from material objects, and the variety of incidents following each other; by which the length or duration of Time may be measured, as a proof that Time is a material idea—for what has the method of measuring the length or duration of Time (or rather the method of conveying to another the notion of that length or duration) to do with the abstracted idea of time itself? much the same difficulty you seem to labour under with regard to space, by alledging the material idea of the boundaries thereof, to be *that* of the intermediate vacuity. On this head I shall



shall only add—that whilst my mind is conscious of many ideas independent of, and unconnected with matter, which, consequently, never could have been impressed on it by material objects, it will strenuously maintain its own power of forming such conceptions, which to itself is perfectly clear, tho' the communication of them is rendered impossible for want of illustrations, which in all cases must, to be made intelligible to another, be taken from matter, and therefore, can in this be of no use.

My supposition, that the bodies of men might perhaps be animated by those etherial beings who had fall'n from a state of perfection was what, I told you, as mere theory, I should

should not attempt to defend against any objections that might be made to it ; yet do I not see that you have urged any thing to lessen the probability of such a supposition. Admitting this to be the case, the different periods of youth and health, age and disease, or infirmity, are not to be separately considered ; but the whole life of man, with all its vicissitudes of pain and ease, vexation and pleasure taken together ; and from thence the judgment must be formed :— Upon this principle the sufferings of infants, which you ask the cause of, who seem to come into the world for no end but to struggle with a painful disease for some weeks, or months, and then go out of it again, may be rationally accounted for, by  
sup-

supposing their degree of guilt so small in the pre-existing state as not to have sufficiently corrupted their minds to make a future state of probation necessary, and therefore, that after the deprivation of happiness for a determinate time, and the undergoing this positive punishment, they may be restored to their former state of felicity. If the word punishment should here be objected to, because nothing can properly be call'd such, which the sufferer is not conscious of, it may be answered, that though infants are not so at the time, they may afterwards be perfectly conscious of these sufferings, as well as the cause of them, and the remembrance thereof may be an effectual security against any future error or misconduct.

If

If you reject this opinion, and say, that rational souls were created on purpose, to animate the sickly bodies of these children for a few months, why were they endued with reason, when that reason could be of no sort of use to them? and what state can you suppose them qualified for on their removal from hence? incapable of doing either good or ill, they merit neither reward or punishment; and according to your hypothesis, that the mind is nurtured by material Ideas wholly, and can be conscious of none but what it received from material objects, these minds cannot have any, and must go into another world in, what may not improperly be called, a state of idiotism.



Your question whether the Deity interferes in regulating the œconomy of our bodies as to health, I will not answer in the affirmative; though in many cases do not think such an assertion either improbable, or at all derogatory to the divine nature. Those diseases brought on ourselves by intemperance, or inherited from our parents, are so plainly the effects of a visible cause, that nothing less than a miraculous exertion of almighty power could prevent them. In the case of epidemical distempers the cause is not so certain. Though they are generally supposed to be communicated by the air, yet it is a dispute amongst physicians how the air comes to be thus infectious; and admitting this to be the origin, to  
 what

what cause must be imputed the importation of the plague from one kingdom to another? It has been said to have been convey'd over half the globe by a letter, without the persons receiving any infection who carried that letter. Is it to be supposed that the small quantity of noxious air that could be sealed up in this bit of paper, bursting forth on it's being open'd, like the fabled evils of Pandora's box, instantly contaminated the whole surrounding Atmosphere; and with the swiftness of an eagle's flight, spread the dread pestilence from town to town? I am not sufficiently versed in natural causes to assert, or deny the possibility of such a consequence; you best can decide that matter, but admitting it may be

thus accounted for, I confess, I am far from thinking it unreasonable to suppose the immediate hand of heaven in such national calamities; often have they proved a great check to vice and immorality, and produced a total change in the manners of a nation; and will you say that the extensive encrease of virtue and happiness in the rational creation, is not a cause worthy the interposition of almighty power?

Your description of the rise of states, their growth, the progress of manners, and the encrease of knowledge, is ingenious, and for the most part just, but though it is granted that the improvements which one generation makes on the discoveries of

of another is the principal cause of the advancement of science, it cannot from thence be inferr'd, that a man who has improved on the inventions of another had no innate ideas of his own, and therefore I see not how that makes for your argument.

Though I still think that truth is on my side of the question, I am convinc'd of my own inability to support it with all that strength of argument, which the subject, managed by an abler pen, would admit of, shall therefore drop the contest; but remember you are not to bear off the laurel, as I have not yet subscribed to your opinion.



I shall expect to hear whether you continue equally pleased with the rural scene, and can with truth assure you, that an account of your health and happiness will always give pleasure to

Yours, &c.

## LETTER VI.

*To Miss Louisa ———*

I Do not expect to have an hour to myself all this day, my dear Louisa, but will make the most of my little time by commencing the performance of my promise; and when the post goes out shall send off what is wrote, however unconnected, without thinking it necessary to apologise for that, or an abrupt conclusion.

In every treatise on education that has fall'n in my way to peruse, there has been some excellent rules

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join'd

join'd to, what appear'd to me, many capital errors: I will not, therefore, pretend to determine which, upon the whole, may be call'd the best; but will venture to say, that a servile imitation of either must be injurious. Many ill consequences have I seen arise from an injudicious adherence to all the directions of a favorite author, whose system was, perhaps, authenticated to himself, by his own success in one particular instance, to which it was peculiarly adapted; but apply'd to a thousand others, might produce a thousand different effects.

Some few general rules may be laid down that will equally suit all children in the earliest stage of infancy

fancy ; but these cease to be of use as soon as the temper, or rather natural dispositions, can be discover'd ; when those inherent propensities, those predispositions, which every child may, I think, be said to bring into the world with it, must be closely attended to, in order to form any advantageous plan of education. These natural features of the mind are as various as those of the face, and it is as difficult to find two children with whom exactly the same method of instruction, or the same sort of correction will suit, as it is two constitutions that require exactly the same kind and quantity of food and medicine.

The



The main point, therefore, to be regarded in writing on this subject is to avoid advancing any maxims that, however good and useful they may be found in particular cases, will not allow of a general application; and to keep so clear of all ambiguity of expression, that the words made use of cannot possibly be taken in any sense but that intended to be convey'd; as the greatest mischief must arise from the misapplying, or misunderstanding of *rules*, which in that case become a sanction to errors, because the judgment, apt to rest too securely on those it has once deliberately adopted, is often so prejudiced in favour of their utility as not to see the evident disadvantages that must arise from a general and implicit observance

service of those particular directions, which may be as pernicious to one disposition, as they are serviceable to another.

As a proof of this assertion, recollect the painful, and injurious, not to say cruel, scenes you have been witness to in the families of Lady L—, Mrs. I—, and your cousin F—, from a very injudicious application of those rules, which, in a particular case, Mr. Locke might, perhaps, have found eminently useful.

Thus you see, my dear Louisa, I have confin'd all the beneficial directions that the wisest man cou'd give for the education of a child whose natural propensities he knew  
nothing

nothing of, to those very few certain invariable rules, which being equally adapted to all the human species cannot be misapplied to any. This narrow field we shall soon travel over.

Let us begin with food and raiment, the two first things necessary. The former I know you will, if possible, administer yourself in the manner nature has intended; where this happens, by some accident, to be impracticable, which is very rarely the case, cow's milk, diluted by water 'till it is brought to the same consistence of the mother's, unmix'd either with flower, bread, biscuit or sugar, is by far the best substitute, and, as coming the nearest to what  
nature

nature intended, will agree the best with *every* constitution; in hot weather the milk shou'd be fresh drawn at least once in eight hours, and never given warmer than it comes from the cow. The finest children I ever saw were rear'd in this manner; without once tasting any thing else for the first twelve months, and in a single instance I knew it continued for eighteen months with equal success. This method is undoubtedly preferable to the bare hazard of imbibing ill-humour, or disease, from a woman whose temper and constitution must be very imperfectly known: here a mother's close inspection is absolutely necessary, it being almost impossible to make the lower class of people, who are hired to take  
the



the care of children, believe the utility of this uncommon method; and, consequently, unless the most prudent precautions are taken to enforce the obedience of these orders it will be in vain to give them.

The cloathing of children shou'd, in this climate, at first be warm; if born in the summer it must not be lessen'd till the return of hot weather after the ensuing winter, if in the winter, this may be done in the month of June following, provided the weather be seasonable; and great care shou'd then be taken to abate the warmth of their cloathing so gradually, that the difference may be imperceptible to them. After it is thus reduced to a proper standard  
which

(which in my own opinion can hardly be made too light, but in that you must judge for yourself) no alteration shou'd ever be made in consequence of the changing Atmosphere, but an exact equality in the warmth of their habit preserved through every season of the year, the utility of which will be proved by every experiment.

Many prudent alterations have of late years been made in the first dress of infants, but many more are yet wanting; the barbarous custom of swathing is not yet universally exploded, and others little less injurious too generally retain'd; particularly that of dividing their garments into a multiplicity of pieces, which not  
only

only prolong the uneasy sensation which to them always accompanies dressing, but by the unequal pressure of different bandages their shape is often injured, and even their health impair'd; the whole of a child's first habit need consist of no more than three pieces, viz. a shirt, a robe, and a cap; the two last shou'd be quilted of a proper thickness to be sufficiently warm: the cap shou'd be fasten'd by a band of soft linen under the chin, sew'd to one side of it and button'd on the other; if a knot is thought necessary for girls, that shou'd first be sew'd on to the cap; the robe and shirt shou'd be made open before, the sleeves put into each other, that both may be put on together; they must be wide enough in  
the

the back to prevent any difficulty in getting the last arm through: the robe shou'd lap over on the breast, and be fasten'd by flat buttons, placed at different distances, to make it more or less tight, which is preferable to strings as being the quickest. By this method the whole business of dressing (which is evidently a most disagreeable operation to infants, and with which it has been customary to torment them for two hours at a time) may be dispatch'd in two minutes, and in a manner so easy to themselves as scarcely to occasion a cry; which is a matter of much greater consequence than it is generally thought. When they are coated this may be managed as expeditiously, and with as much



ease by tacking the petticoats and robe to the stays, which instead of lacing shou'd be button'd on ; loose plaits might hang from the top of the robe and fall over these buttons in such a manner as to make a much prettier dress than that now used, and this continued for the first three or four years wou'd not only contribute much to the regularity of their growth, but also to the sweetness of their temper, which early teasing is too apt to sour.

The infamous custom of bundling up infants in a parcel of cloaths intended to receive and retain all the evacuations of nature, and by which they are so confined as not to have any free motion of their limbs, very probably took its rise as much from laziness as ignorance ;

ignorance; for certain it is that a child, properly attended, may, within a month after its birth, be so managed as to make such a precaution wholly unnecessary. Instinct, in the first stage of infancy, is much the same in the human species as in the brute creation; you know how this matter is managed by the latter, their young know it also and always wait the directions given by the dam, who is too attentive to neglect the proper seasons; in the same manner may children immediately be taught by certain signs, and by this means used to be perfectly cleanly from the first: those who have been habituated to such a method, if by chance left too long will indicate their wants in the most expressive manner, and repeat

that indication 'till they are attended to; from hence it is evident, that any inconveniencies of this sort may be prevented by proper management, without having recourse to a method as injurious as it is offensive.

With regard to diet, I know not that any particular regimen, after children are past the state of infancy, is absolutely necessary; the most plain and simple kinds are certainly best, if for no other reason than because they will not be tempted to eat too much, which, in every period of life, is the baneful source of innumerable diseases; to regulate the quantity is, I believe, much more material than the quality, of their food; it will contribute  
much

much to their health to bring them early to three or four regular meals in a day, without giving them any thing to eat in the intermediate space; because, by continually throwing in new matter, the regular course of digestion is interrupted, the tone of the stomach weaken'd, and a bad chyle produced. Water is the best liquor, and in all the little complaints they are incident to, water-gruel and abstinence are generally better remedies than medicine. Worms they will escape being troubled with, if they have but a small quantity of fruit, and that perfectly ripe; under which restrictions they may very safely be permitted to have some of every kind in its season.—So much for the body.—We come next



to the mind, but that, my dear Louisa, must be the subject of another Letter, to this I can only add, that I am much pleased with your remarks on Alphonso's adventures, and that the visible improvement of your understanding and judgement daily encreases the approbation and esteem of

Your most affectionate, &c.

*The Adventures of ALPHONSO continued.*

**H**AD you been at home on that dreadful day, you would instantly have convey'd your wife and children from the horrors of the trembling town, with only those most valuable effects that each could take without impeding their flight. Having happily gain'd the adjacent fields, these would have appear'd to you so incommodious and unsafe for Artimissa to pass the night in, that, by the offer of a very considerable reward, you wou'd have procured a Berlin to convey her to your uncle's. In the forest, through which you must necessarily have pass'd, you

would have been attack'd by a strong banditti, overpower'd, disarm'd, led into the thickest part of the wood, and bound to a tree; from whence your eyes had been tortur'd with the sight of every insult that could be offer'd to the lovely Artimiffa, and your eldest daughter, whose tender age would not have protected her from the violation of the ruffians; who, regardless of the cries and entreaties of the unhappy victims, would each in turn have satiated his brutal appetite, and after stripping and binding them and the two children to separate trees, in the same manner they had done yourself and servants, would have made off with their booty undiscover'd.

Before

Before any person would have pass'd within hearing of your cries, the beauteous infant, cruelly depriv'd of it's mother's care, wou'd, before her eyes, have perish'd by nocturnal damps and want of sustenance; she pierc'd to the soul by the sound of it's pitious cries, and unable to support the sight of its distress, would have exhausted her strength in fruitless attempts to break the cruel bands that withheld her from flying to it's relief; this, added to the anguish of the preceding scene, would have been too much for her tender and delicate frame, and you must have sustain'd the additional torment of seeing the dear object of your tenderest love expire in agonies inconceivable, almost within reach of  
your



your arm, without a possibility of mitigating her anguish, or receiving the melancholy consolation of one last embrace. Hardly would your reason have maintain'd it's seat against the dreadful shock, and for a time your wild despair had bordered so near on madness as scarcely to have been distinguish'd from it. In this situation you would have been found by a party of soldiers in pursuit of miscreants, who taking advantage of the general confusion, had plunder'd the sufferers; but by this time your eldest boy would have been reduc'd by the fright, to a state of idiotism.

This, Alphonso, I foresaw must be the inevitable consequence of your stay

stay in Lisbon, without a possibility of my being then able to prevent it, because your fears for Artimissa would have operated more forcibly in favour of the fatal journey, than any contrary impressions I had permission to make on your mind. In cases of this nature our only method of guarding our charge from the foreseen evil, is by a prior suggestion; for this purpose I urged the visit to your friend, succeeded to my wish, and by that means you escap'd the horrors of a scene that would have baffled the united force of your philosophy and religion. I perceive the silent gratitude that fills your soul at the knowledge of the unutterable misery you have escap'd; you now behold with thankfulness a catastrophe you  
late

late regarded as the worst of human evils, and can even think with pleasure on a separation that, however grievous at the time to yourself, protected the lovely Artimissa, and her beauteous progeny, from a fate more dreadful than the most painful death; and you from the inconceivable horror of impotently beholding all the dear objects of your tenderest affection reduc'd to a state of such unparallel'd distress. You are now convinc'd with how much truth she, in the vision of the night, assured you that the event you then so bitterly lamented, ought to be acknowledg'd with gratitude, as to her the kindest dispensation, who now enjoys a bliss ineffable, which you, after having fulfill'd on earth the time allotted for  
your

your farther probation, may partake reunited in a state of happiness that admits not of vicissitude.

From the moment that you was alarm'd by the trembling of the earth to that wherein you slept in the tent, the agitation of your mind was too violent to allow the possibility of your paying any attention to my admonitions. This was the first time, during my whole attendance on you, that I ever found it necessary to summons a foreign aid : you were then so totally discompos'd that I even fear'd the success of that, but instantly call'd the guardian of Rodolphus, whose pious council prevented the rash execution of your fatal purpose.

Calm'd



Calm'd by the favourable vision presented to your imagination while sleeping in the tent with the good old man, you became again capable of receiving my impressions. I recall'd to your remembrance in the most lively colours the preceeding dream, and strongly inforc'd a sense of the indispenfible duty of an absolute resignation to the will of the great disposer of all events, whose benevolence delights in the good of his obedient creatures, and whose infinite wisdom can never err in choosing the most proper and certain method of effecting it. Your soul acquiesced in this undeniable truth, yet in spite of your utmost efforts, an unconquerable gloom oppress'd your spirits, while reflecting  
on

on the melancholy change that a few days had made in your situation. The fervent prayer you then offer'd for divine assistance to support your sorrows, and suppress every repining thought, was favourably heard, and I receiv'd command to lead you hither, with an unusual permission, to use any compulsive operations on your mind that should be necessary to reduce you to a state wherein you might be made acquainted with truths that have never yet been reveal'd to mortals, of a nature that will effectually silence every rising doubt — Yours, Alphonso, have ever been those of a mind wholly occupied by the desire of paying an unreserved obedience to the will of it's Creator, and never, in any instance, arose  
from

from a vicious inclination ; that, opposing the precepts of a pure religion, is often most ingenious in raising objections to the authenticity of those commands which lay a restraint on the wish'd indulgence.

Your steady piety has been beheld with approbation, your former causeless fears, and present anguish, with indulgent pity ; and most highly favour'd are you by the commission I have receiv'd to give you a sight of what passes in the planet you inhabit, and to shew you our operations on the mind of man, which are imperceptible to all whose views are circumscrib'd by the material organs of sight. To capacitate you for this discovery it was necessary to free  
your

your corporeal part from all those gross particles which so cloud your organs of sight as to prevent their discernment of spirit. For that purpose I directed your steps this way, and with a force irresistible, impel'd you to enter the chasm, here, turning your thoughts on a subject that totally engaged them, I threw you into a reverie, and supply'd matter for your uninterrupted meditation, 'till seven days had elapsed without your being at all conscious of their passing; by this time all the gross parts of your corporeal system were exhaled, your strength was exhausted and your debilitated body being no longer able to maintain it's functions, ceased to be a convenient receptacle for the immaterial principle, and a



dissolution of the union was on the point of ensuing. In this state, the solid film, that bounds the mortal visual ray, and like an impenetrable veil, renders all but material objects invisible to the sight of man, was refin'd to so perfect a transparency as no longer to obstruct your view, and when, at the repeated sound of your name, you rais'd with difficulty your closing eyelids, I stood confess'd before you. You saw also the translucent substance that instantly restor'd your strength and vigour: This was that celestial light, or pure uncorruptible Æther, by which all beings, (the one self-existent only excepted) are sustain'd. The material food, by which the life of man is supposed to be supported, owes all it's invigorating

ing

ing powers to this celestial Æther, of which it is only the vehicle; 'tis the coarseness of that vehicle which renders him mortal; during infancy and youth this material part facilitates his growth, and gives stability to his frame, but when no longer required for this purpose, the daily relicts, accumulating by degrees, first cause imbecility by impeding, and at length mortality, by totally obstructing the operation of this vital principle.

Had mankind been virtuous, temperate, and regular, disease had been unknown, and an easy gentle decay thus introduc'd would have been the usual method of dissolution; death then had never worn that garb of terror, which vice alone has wove,

but would from all have met a friendly welcome, as a kind deliverer from the burthen of age and weakness. The immense benevolence that occasion'd the creation of this planet for the probation of man, surpasses all comprehension; myriads of of happy beings beheld his amazing composition with astonishment, adored the goodness that contriv'd, and the wisdom and power that formed the system; by a virtuous conduct here, he may secure to himself perfect and eternal happiness in that better state, to which a truly natural death is a most easy, and quiet passage, attended with no other sensations than those of closing the eyes to sleep. To be capable of virtue Man must be free, the abuse of that freedom

freedom is vice, and the result of persisting in it unutterable misery. Without passions and corporeal sensations he could have no enjoyment here; the unlimited indulgence and gratification of those is the source of all the evils he now groans beneath; to keep these necessary passions and sensations, under a proper regulation, a sufficient degree of reason was imparted to him; by neglecting the dictates of this governing principle he has introduc'd a general confusion, and expos'd himself to every possible inconvenience and distress. The consciousness of wrong action subjected him to the fear of punishment, this engender'd superstition; and the follies and miseries produc'd by that are innumerable.



This will be illustrated to you by examples in those scenes I am permitted to present to your view. You are now fit to accompany me, your body so spiritualized that you can ascend with me, and suspend yourself in air; hitherto, continued he, I have assum'd a human form, as most familiar to you, now behold me as I am. — Then starting from the ground he shook his auburn locks, that shed perfumes more sweet than India's spice, and in a moment disappear'd, when the celestial light again surrounded me, as before, accompanied with the same delightful sensation.

LET-

LETTER VII.

*To Mrs. P —*

MADAM,

THE sensible pleasure your last letter afforded me was mixed with no trifling degree of concern, occasion'd by your declared resolution not to maintain, any longer, a dispute which has already afforded me much entertainment and instruction; and has brought me to a state of doubt but not satisfaction; which, without affectation, may proceed from my being some steps in the scale of ra-

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tional

tional creatures below my antagonist  
in refinement of sentiment.

My good friend has had a severe return of his painful complaint ; he has certainly more true philosophy than half mankind ; how few would submit with any degree of patience to his evils ! how apt are men either under painful diseases, or distressing circumstances, to cry out against the Deity ! and with equal ignorance and impiety assert, that a benign and generous being could not afflict his creatures ; thus imputing injustice or malevolence to that God who is infinite in all perfection, or denying his existence altogether ; horrid suppositions both, and in my opinion equally absurd.

Those

Those who impute the evils of life to want of power in the Deity, or say that there is any other being, or existing body in the universe, which withstands the potency of God, self-existent, make our creator imperfect, and strike off his omnipotence.

There seems to me to be two grand purposes design'd by what we call the natural evils of life—First, to make the picture of the universe compleatly beautiful. Secondly, to oblige man to step above brutes, and be the rational creature. The foundation of beauty is variety—The curve line is the most simple object of beauty—To make a strait line, mathematical points must be deposited side by side, in one direction, at equal distances,



distances ; in every curve those points vary their distance and disposition ; now there is a certain quantity of variety which constitutes true beauty.—Let us compare the universe to a picture, we shall see it's objects so disposed, that there are lights and shadows in progressive order ; in our system inert earth rises into chrystals of organic shape, some chrystals so ramify that they ape the vegetable, some vegetables increase so slowly that they may be resembled to the highest of the last rank, different only in life. Again, the first in the class of vegetables has sensation, while the lowest of animals has little more : through the brute creation we may view the gradual steps of reason :—Man no doubt is the gradation

tion between them and the lowest order of superior beings.

To keep up the beauty of the universe, to keep up the shade of beings, the omnipotent creates us in this imperfect state; consistent conduct will, hereafter, meet with a just reward.—This is probably sufficient to account for natural evil; but let us carry on our enquiry.

Would man be a rational creature without what we call evils? I believe not.—You, I know, will not allow the absence of innate ideas, however, most certainly will not deny that indulged passion, or the prejudices of education, may smother them —Had man been created with his present powers

powers, sensations and passions, the purple grape, ready to meet the hand for his repast, no thistle to choke his harvest, no poison to disturb his fruits, the gates of storm always locked, and the sunshine of heaven continually breathing serenity in his atmosphere, and diffusing vigour through his system; wou'd he do more than eat, sleep and indulge? I think not, the depth of his mind would never have been known, while the brute had grown on the sleeping Man: Exertion whets the powers of our mind, nay, one would almost say it creates them; was there no need of exertion, there would be none.—Without exertion there would be no reason.—Necessity, as the proverb truly says, is the mother of  
of

of invention—So justly may it be said, that evil is the parent of happiness; shallow sighted and superficial then are the sceptical philosophers, (if I may give them that name) who call these spurs to wisdom, evils.—Were there no poisons, would the properties of plants be known? were there no diseases, would the nature of this creature man and this globe be studied?—In short, without evils we should never search for ideas, and as that man has most wisdom who has most ideas, the evils of life are the fountains of wisdom, and wisdom the fountain of happiness.

I shall make no kind of apology for troubling you with my hypotheses, I have your permission to indulge  
them



them, besides, 'tis a point that I know you are much interested in, and therefore will not be displeased at the intention : Shall be glad if it produces a more perfect solution from yourself; as you perhaps may start objections that have not occurred to me. If women were properly educated, I mean qualified to obey the laws of nature—their office, I think, would be to start hypotheses to men, whose flower abilities might lop off the luxuriances, and subtract the real truths : but the case is quite different between us, I send you the luxuriant tree, and expect it to be pruned by your more correct judgment. I am, with the sincerest esteem, Madam,

Your obedient  
and obliged servant, &c.

L E T T E R V I I I.

*From the same.*

*To Mrs. P ———*

MADAM,

**I** Wrote to you the 25th of the last month, but have not yet received any answer, and knowing your great punctuality in matters of this sort, am apprehensive that some accident may have happen'd either to your letter or mine; God forbid a more serious interruption of our correspondence by a return of your late illness; be so good to favour me with a line by the  
return

return of the post, to remove these doubts which now perplex me.

The country grows every day more delightful, and I am pleased with a retirement where my occupations are more suited to my taste than in town. The accurate observation of vegetables and insects please, amaze, and enlarge my mind. For different hours, different studies are allotted: botany, chemistry, mathematics, the belle letter, &c. take their turn: I have found, by experience, that changing the mode of application relieves the mind almost as much as a total relaxation, and if a variety of studies may be made to answer the end of amusement, how much time may we gain for the advancement of  
of

of knowledge! but can the mind, say you, comprehend such a multiplicity of subjects? All subjects, Madam, from the œconomy of the Heavens, to the mixing a sallad, are but parts of the same subject—We have but two objects of enquiry, spirit and matter—the whole variety consists in the modifications.—Subjects, however seemingly different, are illustrative of each other—arithmetic and chymistry, or the laws of reason and matter, proceed on the same principles—Arithmetic has but two fundamental rules, addition and subtraction—As multiplication is a compound of addition, so are division, reduction, &c. &c. at the bottom all turn upon these two principles, composition, and decomposition,



which are the first laws of chymistry—and arithmetic is the law of reasoning.—Again,—the doctrine of sound and light, move on the same fundamentals—There is a harmony of sounds, and there is a harmony of colours, and both may be said to consist in the just conjunction of thirds—fifths—and eights; in short, Madam, the whole may be reduced to this; our constitution is capable of a certain number of sensations, each of which is attended with such a positive quantity of pleasure, or agreeable feeling.—All subjects consist of a certain number of modes, and agree with each other in those modes—To continue one of the illustrations I selected above.—The harmony of colours and sounds.—The pleasure  
felt

felt by the nerve is seemingly of the same kind in both, speaking generally ; and here it is very difficult to be understood, particular constitutions having encouraged habits, and broke most natural sensations ; and the feelings from discord in colour or sound, may be of the same kind ; there is often, if not always, a certain degree of pain excited in the idea of the sublime.—A certain arrangement of really disconsonant sounds strikes us with that sensation ; and it is not in landscape the melting down of one small object into another that excites that feeling, it is a certain transition from light to shadow that must create it : so in dancing, the barely graceful is not the sublime, (for the sublime is certainly to be found there as well as

the comic and burlesque) it consists in bold, and varied motions, many neither beautiful nor natural, but all to be attended with somewhat of the amazing.—In short, I think it may be proved that to know one thing well, we must know somewhat of most things, and that a sketch of universal knowledge is so difficult as imagined, I can by no means conceive.—Remember Lord Bacon, Madam, immersed in the business of the state, —a Lord Chancellor of England in a troublesome reign—disturbed with ill health, and teased with party feuds and private contentions, and yet observe him wading through the follies of Aristotle, see him take the knowledge of the world, and mould the whole Chaos into one connected system.

system.—Do not imagine that I have the vanity to presume myself a Bacon, the difference is as great as between the sun and one of Saturn's Satellites; he shone by his own light, I perhaps by a borrowed one.

From the whole then, Madam, I would draw this conclusion, that to allow the mind fair play, is to shake off prejudices—to allow it to look on all sides; not to barricade it on the right hand or the left: when it has once obtained a general view, it's own curiosity will prompt it to a particular one. We have no absolute evidence, says Malbranche, without knowing every side of every fact; and I think no man can reason accurately on spirit who is ignorant of matter, or pre-



tend to explain the laws of matter without having studied what is known of spirit, and these are of all others different. From hence I conclude, that a sketch of universal knowledge is necessary to the understanding, perfectly, any single branch of science, and hope you will not censure me as straying from my own particular province, while I am endeavouring to improve the science my studies are peculiarly adapted to by the assistance of those lights that may be thrown on it from the more accurate knowledge of others.

I had almost forgot to tell you, that by allowing part of the afternoon to the study of history, I am also increasing my acquaintance with men  
and



and manners. This sort of reading by no means compliments human nature; pride, selfishness and revenge, form empires, which are again thrown down by luxury. One age toils to obtain knowledge, and the next loses it; particular passions prevail in particular reigns, which bury in oblivion all others. Different religions have introduced prejudices, Enthusiasms, and Scepticisms; different systems of philosophy have confused truth, and universal deceit so undermined it, that if all the actions and principles of men could be thrown into one view, the fancied Chaos would have less confusion in it. When one looks over, in half an hour, the lives and conduct of millions, one cannot help resembling

M 4

them

them to mites struggling in a sun beam for the brightest place: but though folly seems to demand the first place in the conduct of human affairs, and we see ten to one pass through life without ever thinking, yet virtue when it has struggled through the prejudices of custom, wisdom through Enthusiasm, and knowledge through the clouds of false hypotheses, appear with the brightest lustre, and demand all that study and deference which the true followers of them have shewn.

The amusement that employs my evening care I am impatient to describe to you, it is of the same class with that of Adam in paradise, and and of all others the most agreeable,

I mean

I mean, the laying out, according to  
the laws of nature and consequently  
beauty, a spot where

The rude bramble, with it's thorny coat,  
Scatter'd abroad it's wild luxuriant stems,  
Choaking the silver primrose as it smiled,  
With pearly dew drop in it's silken cup.  
Where scraggling fies their ebon branches spread,  
Where hollow oaks, with mould'ring broken stems,  
Support the varnished ivy in it's course,  
While little oaklings struggle thro' the briar;  
Where the bird cherry, drefs'd with flowers of snow,  
The haughty elm with manly branches bends :  
Where gentle woodbind, delicate and sweet,  
Seeks a support from hawthorn, ash, or oak.  
Like the fair creature formed of Adam's Rib,  
From the more bold and sturdy of the race,  
In charms inferior, though the first in strength.

Where ragged rocks with broken hollows nod,  
And noisy waters rush precipitantly down  
From stone to stone, from root to stone again,  
Now gliding through a smooth and pebbly bed,  
Now bubbling hoarse and strong.

Where

Where the deep shade and pathless daified vale  
 Tempt butterflies to spend their nightly hours  
 In flow'ry rose or foxglove ; or where bats  
 Their circling journeys take, and when the Sun  
 In Capricorn enlivens all the south,  
 In hollow trees or rocky caverns sleep.  
 Where the grave Linnet and the golden finch  
 Pour, undisturbed, their harmony divine,  
 While Zephyrs catch the sounds, and mingle them  
 With those of falling waters, rustling groves,  
 Lark, throstle, blackbird, and the hollow base  
 Of rook or crow, to make the concert still  
 Superior to Italian art, or Handel's stroke.

To this sweet spot, the parent God of spring,  
 Fair botany, with crown of Caltha gay,  
 Led her young scholar to defend the cause  
 Of hidden beauty, to display to view  
 Her various plants, and prove their destin'd use.

Here through the brambly paths I force my way,  
 Drag honey-suckles chained in sloe or thorn,  
 From these unseemly unadorned allies,  
 And wind them careless with the circling stem  
 Of wandering Ivy dressing ragged oaks.

Or



Or crop luxuriant branches from the rose,  
Bending it's boughs as fancy may direct ;  
Or mingling jessamine, soft pliant shrub,  
In beautiful embrace.

Nor do I let the hedge row, rank and wild,  
Revel in hair bell, cowslip, or the purple blush  
Of soft veronice ; but these oftentimes I steal,  
And mingling them with moss, my banks adorn.

Naiads and water nymphs, with dewey robes,  
Your aid I ask'd, nor have I ask'd in vain,  
You taught me how to guide the noisy stream  
And tumble in cascade below cascade,  
Through moss-grown craggy cliffs and mouldring  
banks.

Nor has the rocky cavern been forgot,  
Where fable says, the dropping mermaid combs  
Her emerald locks ; for here with roots and moss,  
Variety of shells and glitt'ring rock,  
I've made a grot for contemplation sweet :  
And here, cool shelter'd from the mid-day sun,  
This friendly office, correspondence rich,  
To me at least, I happy now indulge.

Hark !—In the noise of yonder falling stream  
The muses syren speaks.———

Calls

Calls fancy from the closet of the mind,  
 Where, in mechanic dull, it's chain'd through life,  
 But being wak'd, each shrub or opening plant  
 Dresses itself in other robes, new charms,  
 Gay beauties, hidden from the vulgar eye.  
 Soft magic welcome, welcome angel dream,  
 Unclog me quick, and let me far expand;  
 Off with the fetters that confine each sense,  
 And if innate ideas are deposed  
 Conceal'd in some warm corner of my mind,  
 Expand them quick, for fain would I be thought  
 Deep and refin'd enough for Myra's pen.

Ye rocks that seem to nod with craggy heads,  
 Whose hollow caverns shaggy roots support,  
 With all your horrors raise me to sublime,  
 Give we ideas strong, majestic, just.—

This rural scene, I believe, has carried  
 me too far, I have already intruded  
 too much on your patience, and must  
 break off abruptly, but I comfort my-  
 self that you will forgive me, saying  
 of you as Milton does of his Lycidas.  
 So with all due regard I subscribe my-  
 self, Madam, your most oblig'd, &c.

## L E T T E R IX.

*To Mrs. G ———*

I Did not recollect, 'till after my last letter was dispatched, the promise of enclosing another from the old gentleman; it shall be sent this evening; you will find it only another picture of the same good heart of which the invariable bent appear'd in every action, and almost in every sentence that escaped him.

Your observations on my friend's poetry are very just, and I am pleased that you have found out some beauties that were not discover'd by me; those  
scraps

scraps appeared so little to the credit of her genius, that nothing but the strong inclination you expressed to see the stile of her early religious epistles, would have induced me to write out what my memory retained of them; -on my word that will not supply me with another line, or you should not ask twice for it; I have some where the copy of a hymn, which, if I can find, will send you.

I think my last letter left off with her resolution rather to run the hazard of any use that might be made of her letters, than try to recover them by a reconciliation with a man whom she most heartily despised for having threaten'd such a piece of revenge; before, he was indifferent,  
but



but now, became her aversion ; and to have seemed commonly civil to him would have been a species of deceit that she could not practice. She wrote however once more to demand the restoration of her former letters, by the bearer, and was answer'd by a verbal message, that he would deliver them into her own hands, if permitted to see her alone, but to no other person ; this was refused, for having never yet seen him but in public company, (a rule that was invariably observed with all her lovers) she would not depart from it even on this occasion.—Thus they remained with him, and she flatter'd herself into an opinion, that he could not possibly descend to the mean revenge he had threaten'd, but in this was mistaken.

mistaken. A few days after the gentleman disappear'd, and a friend of his was commissioned to hand about these papers in every company ; he perform'd the office with a malicious pleasure, and the addition of every sarcastical reflection, in a room full of company, amongst whom was an old gentleman who had much penetration, saw into my friend's character, esteemed her good qualities, and was hurt by the indulgence of follies that so much obscured them, he took her part with warmth ; represented to him the meanness of executing a low revenge for a friend who was ashamed to appear in it himself, and added, that the young men of his days would have thought it an indelible stain on their honour to have acted

ted so ungenerous a part by any lady.

This good old gentleman immediately informed her of the use that was making of her letters ; blamed her greatly for having wrote them, though he said that, exclusive of a few epithets, they were in themselves unexceptionable, and might be printed : but the carrying on any such correspondence was inexcusable, and imputed it wholly to the vanity of writing well ; he advised her, to get these papers again into her own possession, if possible, and never to put it in the power of another to serve her in the same manner. Her rea-

son assented to his opinion, she promised to follow his prudent advice and went immediately to a man of great power and consequence, related to him the whole affair, and entreated his assistance to recover her letters. Here again she was severely reprimanded, and told that a person who could make so ill a use of so good an understanding ought to suffer the consequences. However, at length he promised his assistance, went immediately to the gentleman and got the papers restored to her, but this could not silence the reports that were industriously propagated to her disadvantage, and founded on too much reason; for it must be owned, that no part of her conduct in this affair

was



was justifiable. I have not here a word to urge in her defence, but that she was very young, extremely thoughtless, foresaw not the consequences, and was afterward so sensible of the error as never again to be guilty of the same fault; I mean, never but this once carried on an affair of this nature so far as to make the breaking it off deserve so harsh a name as this merited. I could wish to bury a circumstance I so thoroughly disapprove, in eternal oblivion, but a regard to truth will not suffer me to suppress or extenuate it.

When the letters could no more be produced, the same spirit of resentment shew'd itself in a few scurrilous lines; luckily they contained

N 2

neither

neither satyr or wit ; and were too low a kind of abuse to gratify the general love of scandal, or do the injury intended.

This story no sooner reached the ears of Prudentia, than she made use of it for the purpose it was so well calculated to serve, and again endeavour'd to prevail with Mr. M— to lay some restraint on his daughter's liberty, and to permit a constant watch to be kept on her actions.

A consequence drawn on herself by imprudence, she ought certainly to have submitted to with patience, and very probably might, from a just sense of the error, had she looked on it as her father's proper act ; but regarding

garding him as under the influence of Prudentia, whose judgment in all such matters she with reason heartily despised, the thought of submitting was insupportable. Here, could my friend have played the hypocrite, she might instantly have thrown off the yoke; to have put on the appearance of that religious turn which was sometimes real, staid at home a good deal, and conversed with her father in his own way, would presently have regained all her influence over him, dispossessed his mistaken adviser of the power newly acquired, and established her own on a foundation that nothing could have shaken; tho' she evidently foresaw the certain success that must attend this method, yet not feeling any tendency, at this time, to

such a disposition, was above the meanness of practising deceit ; and chose rather a warm and open opposition to the old gentlewoman's plan ; by which the intended restraint on her liberty was, for that time, prevented ; but the indefatigable industry of this officious Duenna and her spies, in observing and censuring the gaiety of my friend's conduct, and their happy talent of placing every trifling circumstance in the most disadvantageous light to her father, in the end accomplished the design.

Her perfect knowledge that emissaries were continually placed upon the watch to carry intelligence, far from producing a greater degree of prudence and circumspection to disappoint



appoint their intentions, encreased her natural giddiness and apparent dissipation; and, from a spirit of opposition, she shewed more levity than ever in her general behaviour, which afforded them all the advantages against herself that could be wished; and I am convinced that she then ran into many little indiscretions for no other reason but to shew her contempt of their constant observation.

Of this I will give you only one instance. Amongst the tales they were continually carrying to Mr. M—— he was told that his daughter was in love with, and received the addresses of an officer, whose character was so bad that no woman of reputation would be seen in his company. To

this man she had, in reality, never spoken three sentences, and these merely accidental, in a general conversation with other people. She disliked, and had avoided him as much as common civility would permit ; and having, by this assurance, removed the apprehension that had been instilled into the father, all had been well could she have suppressed her resentment for an insinuation as false, and as much to the disadvantage of her understanding and judgment, as that formerly thrown out with regard to the shepherd. — This was wounding her in the tenderest part, she lost all patience, loudly complained of the ill offices that were continually doing her, by misrepresentations and false assertions ; and scrupled

pled not to declare, that a continuance of such treatment would infallibly drive her to dispose of herself in that imprudent manner, they again pretended to fear, without the least foundation; and, should this prove the case at last, the old gentlewoman must take the blame upon herself for having made her present situation so perfectly disagreeable, that it seemed hardly possible to exchange it for a worse; by this means she imagined, that if these people really wished her welfare, and were only mistaken in the method of promoting it, they would be afraid of pursuing a conduct that might urge to this extremity; to encrease the apprehensions intended to be raised by her declaration, she very imprudently shew'd  
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a particular attention to the officer above mentioned, regardless of so disadvantageous an appearance to herself. The effect was directly opposite to her expectation; Prudentia, now full of resentment, warmly urged the necessity of laying an absolute restraint on her liberty, on pretence of preventing the execution of these threats; her late behaviour to the captain was alledg'd as a proof of such an immediate design: His character was painted in so vile and infamous a light, that her good father shudder'd at the bare possibility of her being united to such a wretch, and laid his commands on her not to stir out of his house without leave, and at the same time declared she should never obtain that again, to go to any public  
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assembly; that he should dispose of her in marriage as soon as the young gentleman, for whom she was intended, arrived; and 'till then would take care to prevent her receiving the addresses of any other person. He added, that it was still in her power to avoid the ill-natur'd reflections that a known restraint would occasion, by voluntarily declining all invitations to appear in public company, which he wished her to do; but if any applications were made to him by her acquaintance, he should make no scruple of giving his reasons for a refusal, however disadvantageous those might be to her; and if these positive injunctions were once broke through, he would lock her up and set a person, who could be trusted,

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continually over her. This was spoke with a firmness and resolution so unusual to him, and so opposite to his general character, that it evidently proved all opposition would be vain; she guessed who was meant by a *person* who could be trusted, and trembled at the thought of being under the direction of such a Duenna.

The point was now carried against her, and the only card left to play with advantage, was to submit with a good grace, and by that means to preserve a sufficient degree of liberty to effect a determined change of this disagreeable situation. She was extremely hurt at the thought of leading her father into a false opinion; yet, as no other means remained of escaping

escaping a subjection that would have been insupportable, she hesitated not to receive his orders with an apparent ease, and promised a willing obedience to his commands. The good old gentleman, who had been prepared to expect a very different reception of these injunctions, was much moved by this agreeable disappointment, and glad to entertain a more favourable opinion than had been industriously instilled into him; his anger subsided, he became himself again, and behaved with perfect good nature. She took this opportunity of assuring him, that she never had entertained the least thought of, nor had received any addresses from, the person he had been made to believe she was on the point of marry-

marrying, and would instantly break off all acquaintance with him; he seemed much pleased with this promise, and soon regained his usual cheerfulness.— A severe head ach obliges me to lay aside the pen.— Adieu, my dear friend, may your happiness be always equal to the ceaseless wish of



Your most affectionate, &c.